

Honoré James Henry

A Novelette by  
Hanna Rion

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# LIPPINCOTT'S MAGAZINE

JULY, 1915



## Honoré James Henry



& Hanna Rion

A Novelette by the Author of  
A Garden in the Wilderness

A PIANO ornate with brass candleabra, an old French hunting horn hanging above it, three chairs rivaling each other in their excess of dilapidation, hundreds of anticipatory tomato baskets piled high in one corner, a tricolor flag over the door—such was the furnishing of the huge, uncarpeted, unpapered, uncurtained room in which Miss Emeline Bonaphant sat precariously on the edge of a tipsy chair as she drummed with her fingers and tapped with her toes a symphony of impatience and temper.

Overhead could be heard the rapid steps, back and forth, of two men; these steps caused the flimsy flooring to jiggle and creak and even once in a while to give so near a cracking sound as to cause Miss Emeline Bonaphant certain nervous tremors.

Through the ceiling came fragmentary orders and replies, but all the joy which Miss Emeline Bonaphant

might have got from overhearing what the Frenchman said to his "slave" and what the slave replied to his master was frustrated, as Miss Bonaphant could understand neither Greek nor French. Just when Miss Bonaphant had taken her hundredth inventory of the room, there was a descent of the stairs, girlishly sudden and tripping, the door opened and Monsieur Despard entered, advanced three steps, then collapsed at the waist in a bow profound and at the same time subtly interrogative.

To have glanced superficially at Monsieur Despard one would have declared him to be a man of perhaps thirty-nine; to have scrutinized him would not only have been bad taste, but futile, for although a merciless examination might have disclosed some deficiencies in his make-up, it would in no way have brought one closer to a realization of the actual age of the man. Only his Greek at-

tendant knew that, only he knew the time it took to arrange the two-part wig of the master to a perfection, to touch up the eyebrows to just the exact old rose and bronze of the wig, to dye the mustachios and pointed beard to the same harmonious unity of eyebrows and hair, leaving a few white hairs of the mustache untouched to give a delicate suggestion of an approaching afternoon of the years.

Monsieur Despard had no liking whatever for Miss Emeline Bonaphant, in fact he felt her to be his greatest personal enemy and often wished she were a man that he might run her through with his now fast rusting rapier. Yet, not even to face this foe would he neglect the half hour's erasure of Time's imprint; on the contrary he seemed to delight in protracting and elaborating his toilet when preparing to face the eyes of the severe Miss Bonaphant.

We left Monsieur Despard bent like a jack knife and so he remained until Miss Bonaphant's crisp, unsentimental tone brought him to sudden erect alertness and tingling indignation as she said:

"You've got to put that dog to death or I will."

"Madame!" shrieked the Frenchman, making the infuriated spinster feel the very foundation stones of her spinsterhood rock under the earthquake of this term of address.

With reinforced venom she pursued:

"He's been eating the fowl eggs again and if *you* don't put an end to his good-for-nothing, thieving existence, the next egg he samples *will*."

During the last sentence the small, beautifully-shod feet of Monsieur Despard had walked the quarterdeck of the room back and forth so rapidly as almost to blur his figure to the vision, but at the end of her sentence his arms flew into the air and for a

full minute the room was filled with a turmoil of gesticulation as Monsieur Despard tried to find one word in all the boiling fury of his brain suitable for the ears of a female. But before that discovery had been made, Miss Emeline Bonaphant had arisen from the chair, shaken out her skirts and with nose in air had swished out of the door.

"Contopolos!" cried Monsieur Despard as he sank into a chair, his fingers recklessly tearing through the bronze curls of his head. The Greek being immediately on the other side of the door leading to the staircase was enabled to rush at once to the side of his master.

"Your Serenity must not so excite yourself," pleaded Contopolos. "Let me excite myself. Let me annihilate that which has so disarranged my master."

"Look!" cried Monsieur, "do you feed Honoré well, Contopolos? Do you see that he has all the large eggs he desires, despite the good price they now bring in the market?"

"I do, Your Highness," declared the Greek. "Honoré has all my eggs as well as his own."

"Then it is incredible, as I supposed, that Honoré should be a thief, that he should be forced to wander to the nest of a neighbor for his luxuries of diet?"

"Quite impossible and quite untrue," bowed Contopolos. "Now if Monsieur would retire himself I will unmake the toilet, after which, if Monsieur will throw his whole soul into a cigarette and recline for a time, I hope that he may recover his placidity."

Contopolos stood aside and inclined a respectful shade as his master, with his fingers to the tip of his upturned mustache, made a pathetic effort to reassume his accustomed debonair grace as he went slowly and agedly from the room.



Half an hour later Contopolos was back in the fields setting out the young tomatoes, the planting of which Miss Bonaphant's call and the Frenchman's subsequently necessary toilet had interrupted. He worked until his strong back and knees ached and the sun had grown red-eyed and sleepy.

At sunset, as Monsieur Despard came out to the fields for his accustomed evening smoke and walk of inspection, a great hubbub of wails and denunciations in mingled Greek and French caused the Frenchman to climb to the top of a pile of sod and manure to discover the cause of tumult.

Once arrived at the summit his arms flung themselves aloft in despair and he stood, a silhouette of anguish against the copper sky, as he shrieked in English:

"O Heaven! My little tomat! My little tomat!"

Down through the acres of newly-planted tomato rows rushed five cows ploughing up the tender plants as they came pell-mell; behind them flew the distracted Greek screaming maledictions as he ran. They were the cows of Miss Emeline Bonaphant. They had either broken through some weak barrier in the boundary fence or else—well, of course, it was all speculation.

One thing, however, was certain: more than half the tomato crop was gone, for Contopolos had that day set out the last plants in the hotbeds and there were no other plants in the country to take their place, for the tomato seed of Monsieur Despard came from a certain province of France, their propagation was hurried in the hotbeds by a secret process which enabled Contopolos to have large healthy plants to set out under acres of oiled muslin at a time when other growers were just beginning to sow seed.

And now—Mon Dieu!—half a crop—half a year's income gone in three blinks of the eyelids!

Monsieur Despard and Contopolos, the Greek, both returned to the house, sat themselves down and wept.

"And I had thought perhaps this year, Contopolos, perhaps this year we might be able to send for—" the rest of the sentence crumbled into the folds of his handkerchief.

"Next year surely, Your Grace, next year of a certainty," sobbed Contopolos.

He had been saying "Next year" ever since he could remember. He had learned to say it from his father who had said it before him.

While they sat in the unlighted kitchen-dining-room, almost stunned by the sense of their great loss, the sound of a curious whining moan came to their ears.

"Go to the outer door of the salon, Contopolos, and call Honoré," commanded the master with a sudden conviction of further calamity.

The Greek passed hastily through the large room containing the piano, hunting horn and tomato crates and opening the door gave a low execration as his eyes fell on the twilighted form of the beloved Honoré stretched across the bottom step.

Alas! Honoré had eaten his last egg.

## II

MONSIEUR DESPARD and his so-called "Greek slave" were not the only mysterious people in this strange neighborhood. Some curious law of attraction seemed to cause many un-historied persons to gravitate to this little township on the unfashionable side of the Hudson.

For instance, there was the man who every week bought one dollar stamps at the post-office and bought them by quantity—no one ever knew

for what purpose. There was that other man of no apparent business whose tremendous mail necessitated an extra bag dedicated to his mail alone. There was "Gypsy Pierre" who spent the winters with his weird-eyed family in a gaunt house on a wind-swept hill, associating with no one. At the first sign of spring he and his family disappeared as mysteriously as the frost, to reappear with the frost in late autumn. Then there was the artist and his wife, whom the postmistress could swear had never received any mail. They were known in that locality by a very different name from that which the artist signed to the large canvasses sent to the New York and Pittsburgh exhibitions.

So when eight years before the Frenchman and his silent Greek had appeared on the scene, purchased fifteen acres of the supposed worthless land adjoining Miss Bonaphant's farm and put up their "château," nobody in the neighborhood asked questions because nobody wanted to answer questions themselves.

The château was not planned by an architect, it was built by Contopolos and a town carpenter, and built with two salient ideas—to make a shelter and to have that shelter cost as nearly nothing as possible. Monsieur Despard had insisted upon the large salon, and the high ceiling thereof, because of the contemplated pipe organ which would one day grace the room when things—financial things—were a bit different.

This high, unsupported ceiling over the large floor space was unfortunate, for the outer shell being of such frailness and economy was in need of much collaborating support from the interior of the house. After the first severe summer storm, accompanied by merciless winds, Monsieur Despard and Contopolos decided that it would be provident to

prop the château from outside. This they did by means of long telegraph poles extending slantingly from the ground to the middle height of the outside house wall. These supports gave the house an unique appearance; in fact when seen in the moonlight it suggested a gigantic spider about to crawl off on its eight extended legs.

The Frenchman rarely ever went beyond the borders of his own land, so that nobody could really claim even a speaking acquaintance with him except his indomitable foe and next door neighbor—Miss Bonaphant.

As for the Greek, his master had taught him just sufficient English with which to barter and trade—no more. However faithful the very blood in the veins of Contopolos, youth was not altogether trustworthy and with too ready English on the tip of his tongue, who knew what disastrous indiscretions might not slip from the Greek in some unguarded moment of temptation by woman or the devil.

To return to the period following the death of the dog, Honoré, Monsieur Despard's rage was of so violent a nature that he did not dare permit himself a personal encounter with Miss Emeline Bonaphant. With a hand to his bursting-with-fury heart he summoned Contopolos and despatched him with messages to Miss Bonaphant which were fortunately delivered in Greek and pantomime.

The loss of so beloved a dog would have caused the Frenchman unendurable sorrow had not the fury inspired by the conditions of that death been so all-absorbing, that to a degree the sorrow was counteracted.

While one day pondering on his wrongs, and attempting to lash himself to some form of revenge—a

thing so foreign to his gentle nature—Monsieur Despard walked slowly and meditatively through the dew of a beautiful June morning, his unseeing eyes lowered to the sparkling grass. He followed the dividing fence of Despard and Bonaphant, skirting the tomato fields. Suddenly his attention was wrenched from thoughts of revenge by a most peculiar sound—a note, a tone, which Monsieur found himself quite unable to recognize; it came from near, quite under his feet in fact!

Stooping, he pushed aside the weeds and grass and there discovered a bundle of white cloth. The bundle lay under the very bottom rail of the dividing fence.

Warily drawing back the cloth Monsieur Despard gave a shriek of amazement as he beheld the wee, puckered face of a happily cooing infant. Pinned to the baby's breast was a piece of paper on which was hastily scrawled in pencil:

"For the love of God, give my poor baby a home."

Monsieur Despard could probably never have distinctly recalled the exact emotions of the next five minutes, they were so contradictory, so chaotic, bringing him nowhere except back to the exclamation point of amazement.

There is no telling what he might have done or not done had not a sudden thought determined action: "If Miss Emeline Bonaphant finds this bundle under this fence she'll claim it." Instantly Monsieur Despard stooped and lifted the bundle. He turned, after looking stealthily behind him and then hastened by strategic zig-zags to the rear of the château. He had decided to "give the poor baby a home."

### III

"SUCH an outrage never before happened in a Christian land,"

snorted Miss Bonaphant to Miss Fubler, her only intimate woman friend, as they sat beside the resplendently glistening kitchen range. The time was June, and the air outside was filled with the mingled fragrance of many flowers, but habit chained them to their accustomed seats in the kitchen.

"One of my field hands was watching him," she continued, "and he says that that baby lay one full foot under my side of the fence, and that the Frenchman took a walking cane with a hooked handle and hooked it into that poor infant just as if it was a fish, and pulled it over to his side of the fence, then took to his heels and ran to the house with that bundle like a thief."

Miss Fubler walled her eyes and said with her hands the things her tongue refused to utter.

"Just take this spy glass, Miss Fubler, and gaze once over there and tell me what you see. I think this is about the time it happens."

Miss Fubler was assisted to mount a kitchen chair, and while she leveled the glasses Miss Bonaphant said:

"You're about to see a sight such as no American ever laid eyes on before."

Miss Fubler, with glasses focused on the Frenchman's lawn beheld Monsieur Despard down on his knees in the grass holding a baby in his arms to the rear of a goat. The baby was undoubtedly taking its nourishment direct from the goat just as Providence had intended it should feed from its mother. The Greek meanwhile stood at the nanny goat's head feeding her from a tin pan.

"My lands a-livin'," breathed Miss Fubler, dropping to the floor weak with astonishment.

"That's nothing to what goes on over there sometimes between those two men and that poor motherless infant. I'd hate to tell you all the

sights I've seen!" Miss Bonaphant sucked in her lips and screwed her mouth as if forcibly to seal things too terrible to disclose.

"And that poor child is *mine*," she continued, "mine by every right of location. Its poor silly fool of a mother intended that I should find that child when she dropped it on my land. She must have known my character and my morals and she knew my bringing up would counteract any sinful traits which that boy would naturally inherit from her and him—its scoundrelly father. Now I've thought this thing over carefully all these past weeks and I've even prayed to be given light to do the right thing, but when I look at the half-naked condition of that child—dressed like a savage baby of Borneo—and when I see it feeding from a goat in that heathenish way, I can see the light even without guidance. Yes, Miss Fubler, I see my duty and as a Bonaphant I'll do it even if I have the whole community by the ears. *I'm going to law!*" She paused a full minute to let this cannon ball strike the target full in the center.

"You ain't never!" shrieked Miss Fubler. "My Lord, Emeline Bonaphant, you oughter been born a man—you're that brave and devilish."

"Yes, I'm going to have the law on that Frenchman and that Greek for two countings—first: stealing of an infant; second: cruelty to that said infant," ended Miss Bonaphant with a flourish of the hands which seemed to place shackles on four wrists at once.

Ignorant of the mine which was about to be sprung under them, Monsieur Despard and Contopolos spent one of their now customary ecstatic evenings playing with the baby boy for that wonderful last half hour before he was put to sleep in the rocking arms of Contopolos to the music

of some beautifully played cradle song—played tenderly upon the piano by the Frenchman. The master and servant had mutually agreed upon naming the foundling "Honoré" in memory of the dog whose tragic death had left their hearts so empty of love until this gift from Heaven was sent to more than again fill their lives.

The baby, having fallen asleep, was laid in its extraordinary cradle—a cradle made by Contopolos from a hogshead and some old chair rockers.

The two men then set to work on their now regular evening task—the preparation of Honoré's wardrobe.

In his youth Monsieur Despard had embroidered most beautifully, but of late years he had almost forgotten the feeling of a needle; he was now trying to recall the old stitches and to force his rather stiffened fingers to nimbleness and dexterity.

Contopolos contrived grotesque patterns by spreading newspapers over the form of the reclining Honoré, then snipped along the outlines of his figure with the scissors. These patterns were then laid on the newly-bought cloth and when the garment was ready for sewing, it was passed over to the master who, knowing none of the plain stitches belonging to ordinary hemming, put the seams together with remarkably fancy ones.

Two happier men than the Frenchman and the Greek were not at that hour alive. The Frenchman, in fact, was so utterly and forgetfully happy that he heard with something of a shock a stave of music bursting from his lips in the form of a whistle. At the sound of that whistle he suddenly felt guilty of some sort of disloyalty—disloyalty to life and his past. He laid the sewing down and addressed himself to Contopolos who was sprawled on the floor over a pattern and white cloth.

"Contopolos, I must write *Her* of Honoré. I owe it to her."

"Certainly, Your Highness, certainly.—Now, would you believe his neck is nearly six and a half inches around!"

"I must put off writing no longer. It is not fair, Contopolos, that this new inhabitant of the desert waste of my heart should be kept a secret from her who has possessed all the oasis of my being these—these several years." ("These several years" had covered all the lifetime of Contopolos and the last part of that of his father.) "She will not, of course, think it inconsistent that I can give house and sustenance to an infant of no appetite to speak of and such small demands of wardrobe—that will not seem inconsistent to her, will it, Contopolos?"

"She is all wisdom, my master," declared Contopolos through twelve pins in the teeth.

"How could I share my wretched estate with one so fastidious and beautiful, how offer to one so accustomed to the delicacies of life, the hard fare of two such exiles as thou and I, Galo." Monsieur's eyes were closed, his head bent, his mind wandered drowsily—for he spoke the name of Galo and Galo was the dead father of Contopolos.

"But the wheel of fortune must revolve, it must revolve to better things. By next year we may send for her—she who could make any land a kingdom, any seat a throne."

"Next year, Your Grace," echoed Contopolos, as monotonously as a clock striking the old dreary hour of midnight.

#### IV

A DAY or so later, the deputy arrived at the château to serve the summons; and had Contopolos had a greater familiarity with the English language that summons would never

have reached his master, although poor Contopolos would most probably have had to stand trial for murder.

In happy ignorance of the significance of the deputy's call the Greek prepared an exquisite toilet for Monsieur Despard, and that elegant gentleman tripped down the stairs into the very jaws of the bulldog of the law. The Frenchman's grace and courtly manner were in strange contrast to the crudeness of this country deputy.

When on reading the contents of the paper, held out in ominous silence by the stranger, Monsieur Despard found himself called to appear in answer to the charge of abduction of and cruelty to an infant, he blanched, staggered, and sank into a chair, weakly gasping, "Contopolos."

That faithful attendant, never far out of reach when anyone was calling upon his master, appeared miraculously and on seeing the condition of Monsieur Despard thought of a thousand possibilities, not one of which had the slightest relation to the present dilemma.

Although it was yet one hour and twenty minutes before the accustomed time for Monsieur's midday absinthe, Contopolos rushed off, soon returning with a bottle and tall carafe. He hastily poured a quarter of a glass of absinthe and without stopping scientifically to add the water slowly from the small side nose of the water bottle, violently emptied it from the mouth of the bottle—a more eloquent proof of his excitement and alarm than the strongest exclamations would have been.

Dropping to his knees Contopolos pressed the glass to his master's pallid lips. The reviving liquid taken, Monsieur Despard rapidly explained in Greek to his attendant the extraordinary summons, the amazing



ways of the law of this weird land, and the villainy of that shocking female, Miss Emeline Bonaphant. Here Monsieur Despard was, through the enmity of his neighbor, to be involved in a scandal which might, for all they knew, become international.

Their excited conversation was suddenly interrupted by the hard voice of the deputy:

"I s'pose you understand you're practically under arrest right now and this here Dago the same as accomplice, so if yer aide-de-camp will jes git a move on 'im and hitch up the ole nag, he can drive 'long, 'n front of you and me and we'll be gittin' on ter Jedge McDonald's."

"Is Honoré—is the baby under arrest too?" inquired Monsieur Despard in quivering tones.

"Nope," replied the deputy as he lighted an explosive-looking cheroot.

"Then, Contopolos," sighed the master, "as you cannot remain behind to take care of Honoré, we must leave him here alone at the château in the care of the blessed Virgin. I do not feel that I can touch that angel with my hands—hands now soiled by the foul accusations of the law; and the spotless purity of Honoré's dawn of day must not know the shadow of a court."

Contopolos hurried upstairs to the bedroom of Monsieur Despard, which was now always spoken of as the "nursery" and there fell on his knees beside the hogshhead cradle. Honoré lay kicking his small bare heels in the air of the sun-warmed atmosphere and sucking a tiny plump thumb. At the sight of his nurse the baby gave a clucking sound of joy and fought the air with his arms, begging to be taken up.

Grasping the baby to his heart, Contopolos' lips moved in strangely mingled prayers of both the Greek and Roman church. Then he hur-

ried downstairs, rushing through the rear door of the château.

"Babette! Babette!" he called.

The nanny goat, down on its knees, trying to reach some especially delectable sprig of grass just beyond the reach of its rope, instantly rose and came in response to the call. Nosing Honoré, as she would have done her own kid, to be certain first of its identity, Babette meantime made the most beautiful throaty, maternal sounds of affection, then turned herself around, spread her back legs and offered her wealth of milk to the nuzzling baby.

"Drink thy triple fill, little camel," pleaded Contopolos. "Drink against the desert hours thou must traverse before thy next meal."

Honoré, thrice filled and heavily sleeping, was returned to his cradle bassin in the nursery; the old white farm horse was then hitched and the three drove to town.

Those village females, who were to be deprived of the pleasure of attending the trial, were stationed at every doorway and window to get all the staring satisfaction possible, as the Greek, the deputy and Monsieur Despard drove by.

In the long side room of the McDonald house set aside for the Judge of Probate's office, it had been necessary to remove the Franklin stove from the center. So great was the crowd, Mrs. McDonald had even been forced to borrow dining-room chairs from two neighbors to provide sufficient seating.

Every window of the room was filled by faces and in all trees close to the office roosted the village boys. These rowdies had decided to "cat-call" and hiss when the Frenchman arrived, but when the noble figure of the gentle, proud old man descended from the buggy to the pavement, with the assistance of Contopolos, the boys found themselves staring in

silence at the Frenchman, who, with chin up and shoulders squared, walked through the crowd and mounted the McDonald steps.

That night Monsieur Despard and Contopolos sat with bowed heads and desolated spirits on either side of an empty barrel cradle.

Honoré was gone. They were childless.

The six hours of the so-called trial were already as hazy as an old nightmare to the mind of the Frenchman, and much more indefinite to the poor Greek, who had understood no word from start to finish.

There was only one lawyer—a pompous youth of twenty-three—in the village; he, of course, had been appropriated by that octopus, Miss Emeline Bonaphant.

Monsieur Despard had been magnanimously informed that he could defend his own case, but as he knew about as much law as Honoré himself it was not an offer of which he could make much capital. Everything that was puzzling and untrue had already been proved against Monsieur Despard and his accessory, the Greek, when the whereabouts of Honoré at that moment had been demanded. On Monsieur Despard declaring that the infant had been left alone at the château (the Blessed Virgin was not mentioned) the opposition had all but cheered aloud. Somehow they seemed to have scored a great point against the Frenchman in their charge of cruelty, and the very trumpeting of Miss Bonaphant's nose seemed to forestall the verdict of the judge.

Judge McDonald's decision had, in fact, really been made early that morning before he arose from his bed. To begin with, Miss Emeline Bonaphant was a fellow church member, and of course church members should stand by one another; besides Miss Emeline did not have a great

deal of cash to spend and quite a deal of coal was needed to keep that Franklin stove running next winter. You never could tell about those foreigners, they always had more money than they let on, they were always saving up money to send out of America, and when America got a chance to nab some of it, why it was the duty of the law to do so. Both the Frenchman and the Greek were probably criminals in their own countries—thus argued the judge to himself—and couldn't stay where they were born and bred. Moreover, it was the clear duty of a Protestant justice to see that no child was left to the fate of a popish upbringing.

The judge, in his impressive final speech, before delivering his decision, had laid great stress on the necessity of providing the gentle influence of a woman in the rearing of a child. Honoré had then been given by the court into the custody of Miss Emeline Bonaphant in lieu of a maternal claimant and a fine of twenty-five dollars and the costs of the case were to be paid by the defendants, Monsieur Despard and Contopolos.

As Contopolos sat that night absentmindedly rocking the empty cradle with a lonely hand, the master startled him by saying:

"No man—no men can cope with a woman. It takes a woman to fight a woman. Oh, that the Marquise were here, Contopolos! She, with the wisdom of a thousand generations of wisdom, would have known how to annihilate this viper of a woman. I must to-morrow begin and write a long and detailed account of Honoré and this shocking trial to the Marquise, placing every detail of my persecution before her, and await her advice."

Again silence fell on the over-silent room, so lately filled with the wails of infant hunger or the coos of infant joy.

After about twenty minutes of thought-filled silence Monsieur Despard again spoke abruptly:

"We are poor creatures of no resource, Contopolos," he moaned. "We are to be excused, I acknowledge, for we were so taken by surprise we were quite unprepared to make an effort of the imagination. Why did we not think to meet this unspeakable creature's imaginary and untruthful accusations by equally shrewd and romantic fabrications? How simple now it would have been to have declared yourself the father of Honoré!"

Contopolos blushed the color of a summer sunrise.

"Your Highness!" he exclaimed in abashed amazement, his hands outspread in helpless gesticulations of innocence. "I? I—I could not claim——"

"It is immaterial," shrugged Monsieur Despard.

"Ah no, my master," protested Contopolos, "it is too great an honor for poor me to claim, that honor might far more fittingly be yours—you the wellspring of all experience and knowledge."

"Perhaps you are right, Contopolos, I shall sleep upon the matter," deliberated Monsieur. "This much, however, I have already discovered: I can stoop to any excess of imagination or even crime to frustrate that dog of a dog of a Bonaphant. To again know the joy of those tender vine-like fingers of the little Honoré clasped about my own, I would commit any excess, I would relinquish my very name and my rights, I would even give up my hope of the Marquise and marry—yes *marry*, Contopolos, that dried herring of a Bonaphant!"

"God in Heaven!" shrieked Contopolos. "Would that next year and the Marquise were here!"

## V

AGE, so long deferred, hoodwinked and defrauded, slipped in when the victim was off guard and fastened its talons upon Monsieur Despard. Contopolos saw his master crinkle like an autumn leaf touched by the fingers of frost.

The wailings of the unhappy Honoré (now re-named James Henry after Miss Bonaphant's father) blew to the château upon the July winds and were pathetically answered by the frantic bleatings of Babette plunging at the end of her rope. Then rumors also began to reach the château of the ailing and not-to-be-comforted condition of the infant. Monsieur Despard discussed with Contopolos each evening the advisability of the desperate resource of a proposal of marriage to the female torturer of Honoré, and each night the servant advised that the master sleep once more upon the matter.

A morning then came when the master declared himself indisposed to rise and at the second glance at Monsieur Despard's ghastly countenance Contopolos came to the first great and independent decision of his life.

Returning to his own small chamber the Greek locked the door; going to an old chest in the corner he unlocked it by a key hung about his neck on a gold chain. From this chest he took a heavy box of metal. Then from another tray of the chest, filled entirely by papers, he selected some sheets and sat down to re-read for the thousandth time the directions addressed to his dead father.

"In case of the death of His Highness notify at once the French Ambassador"—no that was not the page he was searching for, he turned over another and read, "In case of a restoration of His Highness's rights"—no that was not the one, either, then he found one which began: "Should

His Highness reach the age of sixty without change in political conditions in France, and should there be no apparent chance of the restoration of rights, and should he still be firm in his conviction not to unite in marriage with the Princess—, then I, his father, withdraw my objection to the Marquise —, and I further direct that Galo summon her to Greece or wherever my son then be in exile.”

Contopolos sat himself down and composed a letter to the Marquise, which consumed over an hour. He then opened the metal box and counted over the precious pieces of gold, the secret savings of the entire lifetime of the faithful Galo. Contopolos put each gold piece carefully back into the casket, locked it securely, then went below to fashion a strong, wooden box.

That afternoon he left his master on the pretext of going to see a commission merchant in the village, but instead of stopping there, Contopolos drove quickly through that place of such recent bitter experiences to a city seven miles further on, a city where he was entirely unknown.

When the expressman lifted the box, his eyes bulged with surprise at its weight.

“What’s in it?” he demanded.

The Greek knew not the English word, but pointing to a scarf-pin worn by the expressman he inquired “What made of?”

“Gold,” snapped the expressman.

“Same that,” said Contopolos, pointing to the box.

The expressman looked the poorly-dressed Greek over from head to toe, then studied his open, honest face.

“One on me,” he sighed, “but it’s none of my business.” He then marked the box “Bullion.”

## VI

WHEN Contopolos proposed “*Le médecin*” to his master, Mon-

sieur Despard flew into violent indignation and came nearer to abuse of his slave than he had ever done before.

“Cannot a gentleman take a little rest without a disturbance being raised?” he complained. “I am merely fatigued, Contopolos, and desire to lie still for a few days in order more properly to ponder upon a situation which demands my profoundest thought.”

But when Monsieur Despard one night spoke as follows the Greek was indeed alarmed.

Said the master:

“I can imagine a condition of mental and physical fatigue so great that death is not to be despised. Death is perhaps a great respite to many. I have been thinking, Contopolos, of those words in the Holy Writ ‘Come unto me all ye that labor and are heavy laden and I will give you rest.’ Those words alone were sufficient to found an entire religion upon—they offer enough to attract a million followers.”

Could this be his master speaking? —the master whose every thought had hitherto been of life, with an eternally unshattered faith in his dreams and the happiness and unlimited possibilities of the always roseate years to come.

It was indeed time for something to be done. Contopolos thought of the heavy box now crossing the ocean and he was somewhat comforted, but he must do something else immediately, something to divert his master from the *crêpe*-like thoughts of death and rest.

First of all the poor distracted servant bethought him of a lately-arrived bulb catalogue from France, he brought it to the bed of his master exclaiming enthusiastically:

“The extraordinary beauty to be here seen, Your Highness, behold this tulip, for instance, it is of a stem

height of three feet and of a redness not to be believed in outside of Hades itself. And," turning another page, "behold these lilies—a vision of Paradise. Will you not interest yourself in selecting from these pages material for the beauty of next spring. Who knows but we may be selecting bulbs which will flower only to be plucked by the small hand of—of the Marquise herself," ended Contopolos, his hands gesticulating a volume of ecstasy, his eyes shining with a supernatural brilliancy.

But the master was not ignited by the flame of his servant's enthusiasm; it was the first time he had ever failed to respond to this greatest of all delights, the selection of bulbs to be ordered from France. His eyes did not see the enticing pictures on the pages and soon the beautiful catalogue fell listlessly from his hands.

Then Contopolos walked to the window, scratched his head and puzzled. Suddenly the wrinkles smoothed from his brow and he rushed to a basket on the table and drew from it a queerly shaped little garment—the dress of Honoré upon which Monsieur had been occupied the very night before the dreadful experience in court.

"We must not be neglectful of the wardrobe of that little Honoré," said he. "Who can tell at what moment he may be miraculously returned to our arms, and shall he find us forgetful of his comfort? I have just thought me of a new garment which I shall now cut out and if Your Serenity will just finish the beautiful embroidery on this one I shall soon have the new one ready for the stitches."

The lamp was turned to its highest, the needle placed in the thin, pallid fingers of Monsieur Despard, and with cajolings and wheedlings Contopolos eventually saw with delight the first stitch begun.

The embroidery was still in progress when a sudden loud pounding on the door below caused both men gasps of surprise. No one had ever knocked on that door after sundown before. Contopolos lighted a candle and hurried below.

Outside the door stood Miss Emeline Bonaphant, wild-eyed and disheveled. An avalanche of excited and incomprehensible words were hurled at the Greek. He shrugged his inability to comprehend.

The woman pushed by him violently and before Contopolos could recover his presence of mind, she had darted through the salon, rushed up the stairs to the second story and without a tremor of maidenly reserve precipitated herself into the private bedchamber of her enemy. Had she not known that the occupant of the bed could be none other than Monsieur Despard she would never have believed her eyes, for the man who lay staring in helpless amazement at her was almost bald-headed, white-haired, white-eyebrowed, white-bearded, a man with small resemblance to the auburn-haired, handsome, middle-aged gentleman who last faced her in court.

Without a word of apology for her intrusion, Miss Bonaphant cried:

"James Henry—I'm afraid he's dying. I have no one to send for the doctor. Make your Greek hitch up and drive to town for the doctor. There's no time to waste. I couldn't make him understand."

She was gone before Monsieur Despard had recovered from the shock of her first words.

Contopolos, informed of the baby's condition, wasted not a moment in exclamations. He and the old white nag were no more than out of the stable-yard before the Frenchman, forgetting all illness and weakness, was out of his bed, and robed in a crimson dressing-gown was tottering



down the shaky steps of the château.

Stumbling in the dark over the unknown ground which lay between the dividing fence and the house of his enemy, Monsieur Despard, after many trippings and several actual falls, arrived at last at the door of Miss Bonaphant. It was open. Without observing even the ceremony of knocking, he entered and, guided by low, unceasing wailings from above, hastily climbed the stairs. Opening the closed door he entered the room where Honoré lay in a cradle. The distracted old maid walked the floor, clapping and unclapping her hands in utter despair.

Stooping over the cradle Monsieur Despard lifted the baby in his trembling arms and pressed Honoré's emaciated form to his breast, the tears streaming down his own pale and hollow cheeks. Back and forth he tottered soothing the baby with tender, half muttered French words, until Honoré's wailings subsided into little gasping moans.

Not a word passed between Monsieur Despard and Miss Bonaphant. Not once did he realize her presence in the room, but the eyes of the old maid never left the form of the old man staggering back and forth across the floor, bearing his precious burden so tenderly.

The young doctor arrived within the second hour. After a thorough examination of the baby he began to question Miss Bonaphant.

Where had the baby been lately? Had he been exposed to any contagion?

Miss Bonaphant weakly shook her head negatively. The doctor's eye encountered the cradle, an old and slightly dilapidated one.

"Where did that cradle come from, Miss Bonaphant?" he demanded.

Miss Bonaphant started.

"Why, I got it at a second-hand

store auction over to town last week. I couldn't afford a new one," she ended, somewhat defiantly.

"Was the mattress sold with the cradle, too?" questioned the doctor.

"Yes, sir," weakly admitted the lady.

"Just as I suspected," sighed the doctor, "and I had given strict orders that this cradle and mattress be burned. Oh, the greed of some people! This cradle, Miss Bonaphant, was sold to the second-hand store by the Smalls, and the Small baby who formerly used this cradle died of smallpox."

Miss Bonaphant gave a cry of horror and dropped to the floor.

"Has any outsider besides Mr. Despard as yet been in contact with the baby?" asked the doctor.

"No," sobbed Miss Bonaphant.

"Then he will have to remain under this roof indefinitely, for I shall be forced to place this house and all its present occupants under immediate quarantine."

## VII

THERE was never a greater proof of the power of mind over body than in the case of Monsieur Despard.

From the moment of entering the sick room not one thought of weariness or illness entered the mind of the man. In fact, he seemed suddenly endowed with all the strength and hopefulness of youth. He took more than his share of the care of Honoré, for sleep seemed entirely unnecessary to him. All the soldier in the Frenchman had been stirred to do battle, and he was now fighting to win against that most invulnerable of all foes—Death.

Honoré must and should live!

Grimly, yet ever hopefully, he fought through the days and nights; and grimly and equally bravely fought Miss Bonaphant.

Any two enemies united in a common cause must eventually reach an armistice. Working shoulder to shoulder with all thoughts of self and personal grievance laid aside, Miss Bonaphant and Monsieur Despard saw now displayed only the best in the other, and a mutual respect and admiration flowered unconsciously in their minds.

Miss Bonaphant had never believed a man could be so femininely tender to a child, so considerate of a woman. Monsieur Despard, accustomed to only the most delicately reared, ornamental and helpless women in his youth, now realized for the first time the advantage of the stern, practical training of the American farmer's daughter. He never ceased to be amazed at the common sense, independence, executive ability and almost masculine strength of Miss Emeline Bonaphant.

In the small hours of the night during the third week of quarantine the two sat on either side of the then sleeping Honoré James Henry (the baby was now delicately spoken of by this compound name) when Monsieur Despard cleared his throat to summon Miss Bonaphant's attention.

She looked up; a tear blinking in her eye, made her look strangely human and for once helpless.

"Miss Bonaphant, we are no longer enemies I hope," he said, tentatively stretching a hand across Honoré James Henry's cradle.

Miss Bonaphant wanted to take the hand but habit was strong and she had a lifetime of repressed feeling to overcome, so she apparently ignored the proffered hand of truce and clasped her own interwoven fingers more tightly together as she mumbled:

"I don't reckon we are."

"It has, I know, been most trying to your feelings to have a man, es-

pecially me, forced upon your hospitality for these weeks," said Monsieur Despard.

Miss Bonaphant felt in all her being an emphatic denial of this, but habit was strong and the tongue unaccustomed to gentle, considerate, tactful speech and she heard herself saying:

"Of course it wasn't of my picking and choosing."

"I hope," said Monsieur, almost with a blush, "that it has not in any way subjected you to the criticism of your neighbors—I mean our necessarily unchaperoned isolation under this roof together."

"Oh! as for that," said Miss Bonaphant sniffing, "I suppose I ain't got a rag of reputation left—but I don't care," she ended defiantly, with no humor whatever.

"Is it possible!" exclaimed the Frenchman. "Why no man of my entire line has ever wittingly been the cause of blemishing the escutcheon of a woman."

"Well, it's fortunate for you that you don't know these country people as I do," said Miss Bonaphant comfortably.

Monsieur Despard remained silent during several minutes, then he came to a decision within him.

"Miss Bonaphant," said he, "I have thought out an arrangement—with no selfish considerations of my own feelings whatever, but wholly with a view to the protection of you—an arrangement which would seal the mouth of criticism. In short, Mademoiselle, I have the honor of asking your hand in marriage. Stay," he exclaimed as Miss Bonaphant almost leaped from her seat. "Stay, it is, of course, a mere matter of form, it is necessary in order that you may declare to the world that we are betrothed. It will, of course, lie entirely with you to break the engagement when you will after Hon-

oré James Henry's recovery. I, of course, could never be vain enough for an instant to suppose that you could care to consummate the betrothal."

Miss Emeline Bonaphant had sat breathless during all this amazing proposal. After the first gasp of astonishment she had felt an irresistible thrill over the first proposal of her life; she next felt incensed, then amused, then dazed by the curious chivalry of this man. Then, lastly, she, to her own stupefaction, found herself wishing to hear more.

Her eyes fell to her lap and with a singular instinctive womanly gesture she put up one hand and smoothed back a stray gold and gray lock of hair. This gesture came nearer coquettish "primping" than any former gesture of Miss Bonaphant's entire life.

Monsieur Despard at the same moment instinctively put up his hand to thread the luxuriant curls of his auburn wig and was brought up by a sudden shock as his fingers slipped over the waxy surface of his bald dome. It was the first time in all those days and nights of nursing that it had occurred to him that he had on no wig, that his mustachios and eyebrows had not received the attention of Contopolos. With a sudden realization of his unadorned and unbeautiful appearance he cried:

"A thousand apologies, Miss Bonaphant, for my appearance. I came so suddenly to the bedside of Honoré, I had no time to consider the toilet. I must, indeed, have been a trying sight to the eyes. And this dressing robe!" He now realized that, too, for the first time.

"Oh! no indeed," protested Miss Emeline, "I really think you are much handsomer, Mr. Despard, as the Lord and the years have made you—if you'll excuse me for saying so—than with all those false fol-de-

rols. I," she actually blushed, "I've been thinking as I sat here looking at you, that you reminded me of pictures I've seen of grand old cardinals—that is, I mean, the red dressing-gown."

"Miss Bonaphant!" protested Monsieur Despard, folding the admired gown more majestically about him, and giving his mustache a savage upward twist. "I have developed the profoundest respect for you, Miss Bonaphant, during my enforced residence in your house, and since seeing your genuine and unselfish devotion to this blessed infant, I realize that you were entirely right, you were far better fitted to rear Honoré James Henry than I could ever have been."

At this Miss Bonaphant burst into tears and bitter self-upbraidings.

"Don't say that—oh, don't. And I nearly murdered the precious lamb with my mean economy in buying that cradle instead of getting a brand new, healthy one, and but for you, he'd have been dead and buried days ago. No I'm not worthy of him or—or of you."

Monsieur Despard had arisen and now softly tip-toeing across the floor, he reached the side of the weeping, hidden-of-face Miss Bonaphant; with some creaking of joints he got down on one knee and taking one of her large-jointed, over-worked hands in his own exquisite one he said humbly:

"It is I who am not worthy, Miss Bonaphant. I, who in my desperation, loneliness and anger had once planned to ask you to marry me solely in order to punish you and attain again by false and unfair means the little Honoré. I now ask you to marry me to punish me—no not that—that does not quite express what I mean—my English is so lame," he laughed, "marry me, I mean, to—to—"

Miss Emeline Bonaphant gave the first girlish laugh of her life and suddenly to her own perfect amazement she felt her hungry arms reaching out and encircling the neck of Monsieur Despard.

### VIII

**M**ONSIEUR DESPARD now, indeed, found himself in a quandary. He was regarded by Miss Bonaphant as a veritable Knight of Chivalry, while, in fact, in the sane light of next morning he felt like turning tail and fleeing like the veriest coward. He walked to the pine dresser of the bedroom which he occupied and confronting himself in the cheap mirror delivered himself of the following commentary:

"Behold the masterpiece of all God's creation of fools!"

After beholding his unadorned, aged reflection for some time, he seated himself in despair on a chair by the open window, while his mind seethed in a ferment of scarcely formulated thoughts.

That mind was like a rag-bag of tattered bits of old tapestry and old lace. Family traditions—what could they signify to this bleak flower of democracy? thought he. The secret of his birth, the dreamed-for shifting political conditions of his land, his possible recall—how could he ever confide them all to this unimaginative spinster? Only those whose whole life has been formed of secret dreams can know the sanctity of dreams.

He shuddered at the mere thought of unlocking the cobwebbed archives of his life and dreams to the matter-of-fact gaze of the clear-sighted, unromantic, business-like Miss Bonaphant. Actualities had meant so little to Monsieur Despard; possibilities were the sanctuary in which he had spent his entire life of patient expectation and waiting. Honoré

was the only actuality his life had ever really held.

At the age at which he had now arrived, no man could rip apart all the fantastically spun tissues of being. For Miss Bonaphant he felt the utmost respect, almost a tender personal regard; he admired her cleanly housekeeping, her wholesome and unfrivolous cooking, her neat, shining person, her self sufficiency and her absolute honesty, but what were these beside the treasured memories enshrined in lavender of a young Marquise—a memory all flowers and perfume and indefinite delights. When a memory has been filtered through a romantic mind for years, it probably bears small relation to any reality but oh! the glamor and poetry it has gained. Besides, was he not already committed by every promise to that love of his youth?—it was, indeed, late to be remembering that, but now the thought came back and was hugged to his heart even though it ate into that organ with excruciating pain. How ever explain his seeming disloyalty to her who had refused all other offers of marriage for his sake?

Now he must write her of his unfaithfulness, of his unworthiness of her long and patient waiting, and more difficult still, he must, by every tradition of honor, make disclosures to Miss Bonaphant; he must of a certainty declare to her the true name and station of the man who had asked her to share the commonplace surname of Despard.

Monsieur Despard shed actual tears when he realized how little that name would signify to the American spinster.

He was in the very act of groaning aloud as a tap came on the door and the brisk tone of his betrothed summoned him to breakfast. They both said "good morning" with their eyes fixed on objects in the room.

After a very silent and embarrassed meal together the two were glad to repair to the room above, where their little patient placed them again on the plane of mutual interest and service. Honoré James Henry, chirping like a little bird, was this morning quite clear of eye and free of fever. Thanks to the wonderful care he had received, there now seemed no danger of his bearing the ravages of the dread disease through life; only two little nicks were evident in the soft skin of his forehead, while a few pits were scattered here and there over his body. From the moment the doctor had taken charge, he had insisted on a restitution of the goat's milk, declaring, much to Miss Bonaphant's discomfort, that the disorganized condition of the baby from the change to cow's milk had gone far towards causing him to succumb to the infection with such violence.

Babette now grazed every day about the Bonaphant house and at each sound from the baby above, gave an answering bleat. Monsieur Despard attended to the milking.

On this particular morning as Monsieur was holding Honoré James Henry, while Miss Bonaphant slipped a clean nightgown over his head amid wails of intense resentment, there came a sound of steps on the stairs, which caused both nurses starts of surprise, as it was quite too early for the doctor's arrival, and besides the footsteps seemed much too dainty to be attributed to that athletic young man. As Monsieur Despard and Miss Bonaphant paused, looking interrogatively at each other, there was a rude bang at the door which caused them to drop Honoré James Henry back on the bed and both rush at once to open the door.

Miss Bonaphant reached the handle first—she turned it and instantly there was a rush past her and

Babette was in the center of the room. The goat had broken its tether and finding the front door open had entered the house for investigation with ordinary goat curiosity, but on hearing Honoré's cries of protest at the clean nightgown, she had instantly located the sounds and easily mounting the steps had reared herself on her hind feet and so had knocked at the closed door with her head and horns.

Once inside the room Babette sniffed the air, made two or three foolish leaps off the floor, with her head coquettishly on one side, then with mincing steps turned to a thorough investigation of the room, examining each object with the air of a poor relation come to call.

A sudden cry came from the baby; quick as thought the goat with two leaps was upon the bed and with the soft whinnying sounds of the goat mother was nosing the little face of Honoré, while twitching her short tail with joy. Suddenly the goat turned herself about and carefully straddling the baby offered her bag to the now delightedly frantic Honoré.

Honoré had never taken kindly to the bottle and now that Babette was suddenly restored to him he clutched her bag with both tiny fists trying to pull himself up to reach it with his mouth. Miss Bonaphant laughed aloud at the absurd sight and rushing to the bed, actually lifted Honoré James Henry's head to the warm large bag of Babette.

It was a moment of triumph for Monsieur Despard and his barbaric methods, but instead of indulging in such petty thoughts he only murmured: "The touching tableau of love!"

When the doctor arrived he found Babette still an occupant of the room; in fact, that lady was now lying in bed beside the sleeping Hon-



oré James Henry, thoughtfully and contentedly chewing her cud. To Miss Bonaphant's half shamefaced explanation the doctor laughed and declared it to be quite all right; the goat could easily be disinfected, said he, and if the baby enjoyed taking his nourishment direct, why he should have it so from that time on.

The doctor then examined the arms of the nurses and their vaccinations. The inoculation of Monsieur Despard had been most successful, but Miss Bonaphant's first inoculation having failed to "take," it had been necessary to repeat the vaccination.

The doctor as usual took the temperatures of both nurses, examined their tongues and eyes, then said good-bye. When he had arrived at the foot of the stairs he called up:

"Mr. Despard—a moment please. I've forgotten something."

Monsieur Despard hurried below. The doctor led him into the musty, dark parlor of the Bonaphant house, a room never opened except upon Sunday and occasions.

Closing the door behind them the doctor walked to and fro, then paused, one elbow on the top of the cottage organ and said:

"Mr. Despard, I think I had better send a trained nurse out as soon as I reach town."

The Frenchman gave a start.

"Why my dear sir, I thought Honoré quite out of danger, he seems so bright, so quite normal, I——"

"The baby is practically on the road to recovery," said the doctor, "but Miss Bonaphant——"

"I am so dull," apologized Monsieur Despard, "I don't seem to understand."

"I fear you will by this time tomorrow," sighed the doctor. "Miss Bonaphant shows the first stages of infection."

## IX

WHEN Monsieur Despard returned upstairs he walked to Miss Bonaphant and taking up one of her hands, kissed it gallantly (it was the first time her hand had ever been kissed) as he said:

"Alas! dear lady, this is the last day of our absolute empire here, this afternoon an usurper arrives."

"How's that?"

"The doctor has decided that Honoré James Henry is so far on the road to recovery that he no longer requires our expert and devoted services, but may now be turned over to an ordinary nurse of trade."

"The idea!" protested Miss Bonaphant. "He'll be nothing of the kind."

"I quite agree with the doctor," said Monsieur. "We have both been under a long and trying strain, with small chance for rest or sleep, and however extravagant the impulses of our love for Honoré, we must conform to reason and the doctor's better judgment. For my part, I could endure a thousandfold more, but for your sake, my dear lady, I must insist on an acceptance of this respite. We can, after a short rest, both be of greater service later on to the baby when he is restored to complete health. In the meantime we have the remains of this beautiful morning left to us and we will avail ourselves to the uttermost of our joy in hand. Permit me to remark, Miss Bonaphant, that I have as yet to-day received no evidence whatever to convince me that certain strange hallucinations in my mind concerning certain happy occurrences of last night have the least foundation in fact."

Miss Emeline blushed a rosy red but could make no reply.

"Permit me then, to inform you that I am under the delusion that I

had the honor to ask the hand of a certain lady in marriage last night—or was it early this morning?—and I have still further the obsession that that lady gave me not only her hand but her arms.”

Miss Emeline shyly turned her face aside and nervously fingered the edges of her apron.

“Now if these delusions have any foundation in fact you will please wink the left eye.”

Miss Bonaphant was so flustered she shut both eyes and actually chuckled over the delicious foolishness.

“Ah! I see I was not dreaming,” said Monsieur Despard, taking one of her hands and saluting it gravely. “That being the case, and you being the very evident lady of the betrothal, and the future wife of a Frenchman, it is very necessary that you begin at once to familiarize yourself with his natural tongue. So now we shall begin and I will give you your first very simple lesson in French. This object which I hold in mine is known as *la main*. Now say ‘*la main*’ after me and tell me what *les mains* are made for.”

“*Main*,” said Miss Bonaphant tremblingly. “The mains are made for work.”

“False!” cried Monsieur. “*Les mains* are made for holding—thus. Now this object,” touching his own lips, “this is known as *la bouche*. And pray, what is *la bouche* made for?”

“*Bouche*,” repeated Miss Bonaphant, “why the bouche is made for eating with, of course.”

“False!” cried Monsieur Despard, “*la bouche* was made expressly for kissing. And now these charming appendages,” extending his arms, “these are *les bras*; say it after me and tell me for what purpose they are made.”

“*Les bras*,” she repeated, “they are

made for—for—well for vaccination I suppose,” she laughed.

“False!” cried Monsieur, “they are made entirely for the embrace. Now repeat and illustrate your lesson.”

Poor Miss Bonaphant! she had never been so foolishly happy and confused before.

“The mains,” she began falteringly.

“Perfectly correct, now illustrate,” demanded Monsieur.

Nothing happened.

“Oh! the lovely stupidity of my pupil. I see I must demonstrate,” he cried, taking both her hands in his own. “Now the next.”

“The bouche,” said she.

“Now,” said he.

Nothing happened.

“This,” said he, bending forward and giving Miss Bonaphant the first kiss she had ever received from an unrelated man.

She was still all a-tremble when he demanded:

“Next, and third.”

“The bras,” she murmured.

“And—” said he.

Nothing happened.

Taking both her hands which he still held, he placed them about his neck and kissing her again, he said: “Now do you think you can remember?”

Miss Emeline hid her face on his shoulder.

“The first part of the lesson proving so successful, we will not progress to a little conjugation. Repeat after me ‘*j’aime, tu aimes, il aime, nous aimons, vous aimez*’—the last is unimportant and does not concern us.”

Poor Miss Emeline made a sad imitation of his pronunciation but when she had finished, with assistance from the teacher, he cried:

“Bravo! and now we will indulge in a little conversation. Repeat ‘*j’aime*’ if you please.”

She did.

"Ah! so, so! Miss Bonaphant you have just declared that you love. Now I reply '*j'aime*' and you may translate it for me."

Miss Emeline hung her head in abashed silence.

"We will then omit the translation and proceed with the dialogue. Now," said Monsieur, "if you think I only care for you as a formal friend you may accuse me of the crime thus: '*vous aimez*.' If however you suspect that I may have the more delicate and personal sentiment for you, you will then, please, use the tenderer thou of '*tu aimes*.'"

Miss Bonaphant's head was still lowered and her voice scarce above a whisper as she slowly and joyously enunciated, "*Tu aimes*."

"Ah!" cried Monsieur Despard, "I see you are indeed a detective. Now we will say together in the beautiful harmony of a duet: '*nous aimons*.' One, two——"

"*Nous aimons!*" they exclaimed in chorus.

"The first lesson being completed most triumphantly," said Monsieur Despard, "I shall now reward my promising pupil."

Going to the window he leaned out, and plucking a rose from a vine climbing the porch roof, he brought it back and tucked it carefully in the neat, tight coiffure of Miss Bonaphant.

Never had that lady known such utter frivolity as had been indulged in during the past half hour. Life had been so deadly earnest for her, she had never before relaxed reason and commonsense for a minute; and now she felt she never wished to return to hard sense and decorum again.

"I'm so happy," she murmured aloud unconsciously. It was the tragic utterance of a hitherto starved creature.

Highly emotional and sensitive to impressions as Monsieur Despard was, he instantly realized the whole history of heart hunger those words revealed, and he felt a tear spring to his eyes as he said under his breath:

"The good God grant I may hear you say that a million times, my dear." After a pause he added most humbly and reverently, "My happiness shall be to keep you happy as— as—long as I can."

A sound of wheels below made them both simultaneously grasp each other as children might who were about to be snatched apart.

"The nurse," she whispered, her face against his own. "Monsieur Despard," her lips were now to his ear, "I'm so sorry I made you so much trouble. I'm so sorry about the dog and the court, and, and——"

"Don't!" he begged, "don't make my heart to break."

She pressed closer still.

"Hold me tight," she begged. "I'm afraid. Say that conjugation again, quick, before she comes."

He did so simply and with tenderest sentiment.

Then she lifted her lips as a child might and kissed him. Looking him straight in the eyes she said: "I know. I've known positively for over a half hour—that nurse has come for me."

Before Monsieur Despard could recover she was gone.

## X

THE room seemed suddenly filled with a deadly loneliness and stillness.

Walking to the window from which he had so lately picked the rose, Monsieur Despard looked over toward the château with the eyes of sudden desolation and homesickness.

He looked vacantly at first then gave a start of dumbfounded amaze-

ment. Walking through his small garden was a lady and there was Contopolos actually cutting his roses and handing them to the lady, and more amazing still they were conversing—that was evident. With what women in this alien land could Contopolos hold a conversation? No woman of the neighborhood knew either French or Greek.

Monsieur Despard broke into a perspiration.

He could not distinguish the features of the lady at this distance, but the grace and distinction of the figure was clearly apparent. Her slightest movement was fraught with elegance and charm.

Monsieur Despard leaned from the window which now seemed to be filled with the invisible bars of a prison.

"Contopolos!" he cried, but the wind caught his voice, played with it and then flung its fragments to the east and west.

Contopolos was now actually opening the door of the house, he held it back, bowed low and the mysterious lady, her arms full of roses, daintily entered the château.

While Monsieur Despard was tramping the floor of Honoré's room in utter bewilderment and misery, Contopolos was assisting the lady to distribute the flowers among the many new vases of the salon. That room was in a state of revolution and change.

"How fortunate that I brought the tapestry, Contopolos," said the lady, "and how fortunate it is that the ceiling of this room is of the height it is. The tapestry fits the walls as though it were designed by Providence for them."

"So it does, Your Highness," said Contopolos, "and so becoming is it to the piano and the horn."

"See if that door is dry, and if so I will now apply the gilt. It is quite

surprising how a little white paint and a few strokes of gold can give the atmosphere of elegance. And a mirror, we must have a mirror—we can perhaps afford the luxury of two mirrors—is it not so?"

"Certainly, Your Excellency—two at the very least," bowed Contopolos. "That is exactly what he has been in great need of—His Serenity."

"We will go to the city to-morrow and shop again, Contopolos. I adore shopping and the shops of this land are so amusingly versatile. We will purchase the delicate material from which I shall fashion curtains to veil the brazen faces of these windows. And some chairs—wicker chairs—they are of a grace and airiness and economy. Will your master not be delighted and surprised when he returns home after his terrible quarantine is over?"

"He will be overcome entirely with a million various joys, in fact I quite fear for his reason," sighed Contopolos.

"Summon Marie to assist me in the decorations of the doors with gilt," the lady ordered and when Contopolos was gone she walked to one of the "brazen windows" and stared out on the beautiful view of the majestic Hudson.

Already she was beginning to love this new land. France had been very cruel to her loved ones and her. Since the loss of her great estate the Marquise had suffered much.

"But Henri must never know," thought she. "He must never know of the extremities to which I was pushed. Ah! had it not been for the many Americans, coming and going, the American girls who would study and never learn to speak correctly the beautiful French of Racine, what would have become of me? Now I have a home again!" she sighed with relief and happiness. Even the

curiously formed "château" was not un-beautiful to the eyes of one who had lived in furnished chambers for many years, the garden and the farm were what she had been pining for and such a setting!—the glorious river on one side, the hazy dream-like forms of the distant Catskills on the other.

Here she would renew her youth, here she and Henri would gather all the blossoms of love and life they had hitherto been robbed of.

Contopolos returned, accompanied by a black-haired, rosy-cheeked French maid, a coquettish damsel whose smallest glance caused his knees to collapse with sudden weakness. In fact, poor Contopolos had been continually in a flurry for over a week, ever since the arrival of the Marquise and her black-eyed maid. His life had hitherto been strangely empty of the feminine sex. He had learned more of the marvels and surprises of the opposite sex in the past week than he had ever known in all the years of his life before. It seemed to him that here he, also, certainly beheld the most remarkable and beautiful specimens of all womankind.

The Marquise might have been of any age. To look at her one might have ventured to say thirty-five, but knowing what Contopolos knew of the mysteries and possibilities of toilets, he confided to himself, to his innermost secret self, "fifty."

Not a gray hair had the Marquise, her hair was of a blackness to rival Marie's and it was involved in a coiffure so intricate that one felt it to be a problem which only logarithms could solve.

The complexion was the lining of a sea shell, the eyes, of a luminous gray green, were filled with the enthusiasm of ageless optimism and romance. The shoulders were of an adorable roundness and firmness, the

back straight, the neck long, stately, and lithe. Madame's walk was of such ineffable charm as to give one thoughts of Flora and the spring-time.

Ah! the beautiful secret surprises Contopolos had in store for the master when that gentleman should be released from the bonds of quarantine. Surely it had been entirely owing to his own unceasing propitiating prayers that Heaven had bestowed immunity from infection upon Monsieur Despard, thought the Greek.

When the doctor called Contopolos to the dividing fence and told, in the most halting French, of Miss Bonaphant's illness, the servant felt that Heaven was only dealing out a perfectly just retribution to the female persecutor of the most high and noble of gentlemen. Of course, he did not desire that God should carry his resentment too far, but surely a certain amount of chastening would assist in opening Miss Bonaphant's eyes to truth and justice and a restoration of Honoré to his foster parents.

A horrible nightmare now began to possess the thoughts of Contopolos awake and sleeping—the dreaded possibility of Monsieur arriving home before he, Contopolos, could intercept him and arrange the beautiful toilet. Contopolos would rather have died by the guillotine than to have had the Marquise behold his master bald-headed and clothed in that disgraceful dressing-robe.

To avert such a catastrophe the Greek now wrote the following note which he entrusted to the doctor for delivery.

The note ran:

To the most brave, and especially beloved of Heaven, Highness. When the bonds of illness are released, convey a message by route of the skilled hand of the physician to your humble servant, that he may meet Your Serenity behind the



haystack in the barnyard of our now-being-punished-by-Providence-enemy. The beautiful hair of Your Excellency has been receiving my great attention and is now in a state of great shining and curliness. I shall meet Monsieur with all the other small artillery of toilet, as well as the garments befitting your formal return to the château and happiness. To that lovely and beloved small Honoré convey the devotion of his former, and let us hope, future nurse.

With my bow of thanks to Heaven for the preservation of the best of masters, I, Contopolos, make my exit at the bottom of this page.

## XI

A WEEK later Monsieur Despard was summoned by the doctor to Miss Bonaphant's room. She was conscious for the first time in three days.

As the Frenchman entered the room the nurse and doctor withdrew in accordance with the wish of the patient. Miss Bonaphant, disfigured as she was by the dread disease, did not seem un-beautiful to the eyes of Monsieur Despard as he reverently approached the bed. Her long and shining hair lay spread upon the pillow, her eyes, large and hollow, shone with a transcendent light.

He dropped to his knees beside her and taking one of the poor, disfigured, thin hands in his own, covered it with kisses and tears.

"Don't leave me, again," she pleaded. "Come closer."

He did.

"Our secret," she whispered. "It's the only secret I ever had—our engagement. I don't want it ever to be shared with another. Promise me."

He promised.

"That morning before the nurse came is the only time of my life worth remembering."

Monsieur Despard's throat ached with agony.

"It is a bitter and terrible thing for a woman to feel age coming on, and to know she has missed all the chances of love."

"I have been lonely, too," murmured Monsieur Despard.

"I was so starved, so soured, so shriveled inside. I never was pretty and I never had a chance to meet any one whom I could love or who could love me. All the natural good in me was turned to acid as the years passed by and I felt I was missing everything. I wanted children so passionately. I would have made a good mother. My arms sometimes used to fairly ache for a baby—that's why I wanted Honoré James Henry so terribly."

"Yes, I understand," he murmured, pressing her hand.

"Now, I've had everything I ever longed for and I don't mind going. You have made me feel as if I really had all the beauty which I never had. You have brought to my middle age all the happiness which I was cheated out of in my youth. And I have held a baby in my arms and forgotten that it wasn't my own."

"The good God sent him to both of us to take the place of the children we did not have," said he.

"I have provided for him," she said. "I made my will this morning. Everything is left in your trust for our baby."

He bowed his head on her hand.

"Now, go and look in that desk over there—the top drawer—and see what a silly old fool I was."

Monsieur opened the drawer and there on a large sheet of ruled paper was written over and over, "Emeline Bonaphant Despard, Emeline Bonaphant Despard."

"No man is worthy of any woman," murmured Monsieur Despard as, with tears blinding him, he gently folded the paper and placed it in his breast.

At midnight he was still there. Now he sat on the side of the bed holding her tenderly in his arms. The doctor and nurse were there too.

Those three were waiting in that most terrible of all vigils, the vigil over the last struggling beats of a human heart.

Without opening her eyes she once said:

"I'm so happy."

About one in the morning her lips moved again and, inaudible to all ears except those of Monsieur Despard, she murmured "*J'aime.*"

## XII

"**T**HERE!" cried Contopolos, as with the pride of a master craftsman he put the finishing touches to the mustachios of Monsieur Despard. "Your Highness has all the beauty of a chrysanthemum. I would that I had thought to bring the sword to hang at the hip of Monsieur, it would have been but the fitting completion of this, the most beautiful of all toilets I have yet achieved. Now Monsieur will be pleased to slip on these gloves, they will add the last note of elegance."

"But why all this trouble, Contopolos? Just tell me this—is there arrived an emissary—am I summoned to return?"

"Patience, patience, Your Serenity, you have made me the promise to ask no questions, to do in all things that which will make your poor servant happy on this, the great day of your return home. Now let me regard the entire effect." Contopolos withdrew a few paces from the haystack and gazed upon his master with a fatuous expression of admiration and worship.

"But I must know one thing, Contopolos," persisted the master. "With whom were you conversing in the garden that day?"

"Monsieur! Monsieur!" cried Contopolos in despair. "Would you rob the sunset of its surprise of color? Patience! I beg for the thousandth time that you be content for

this once to trust implicitly your humble servitor. For the first time in his life, permit Contopolos to lead, and be content only to trust and follow," saying which the Greek marched forward with the air of a drum major.

The magnificently arrayed and altogether puzzled master followed him through the gate which led to the garden of the château. Autumn was at her loveliest to-day. The hillsides were beginning to glow with color, the fence rows were purple with Michaelmas daisies, the dream of Indian summer lay over all the distance. The garden itself was filled with the glory of chrysanthemums, dahlias, late asters, roses and anemones.

Leading his master to the center of the garden, Contopolos turned about, with the face of a flower himself, and said:

"Now, Your Splendidness, if you do not believe that your Contopolos is a magician he must prove it to you."

"What is all this foolishness about?" demanded the master.

"Now Monsieur, I beg that you humor me this once and play a beautiful game which I have devised. It is a game called 'Fairy tales come true.' Now Monsieur shall close the eyes and count twenty very slowly, then he shall consult his heart and wish aloud the wish of all others which he finds in command of that august organ."

Monsieur Despard with the smile of one who humors a child, surrendered himself to the situation and the witchery of the day and the infectious whimsicality of the faun-like Contopolos and obediently closed the eyes. No sooner had he said "*Un, deux, trois*" than Contopolos disappeared as though wearing the cloak of invisibility.

Having at last reached "*vingt*"

Monsieur Despard consulted his heart and finding therein enshrined the same wish which had held the first place for thirty-five years, he said aloud, "I wish that next year and the Marquise were here."

Opening wide his eyes he saw advancing down the path a dream-like figure in white.

With the staring eyes and trembling limbs of one beholding a ghost, Monsieur Despard gave a gasp as his gloved hands fluttered outward, his lips quiveringly crying:

"Diane!"

With the impetuous rush of a girl

the Marquise ran down the path and flung herself into his outstretched arms.

Behind a delicately curtained window of the salon stood Contopolos at the side of the pretty Marie, who held in her arms the rosy and smiling Honoré James Henry Bonaphant Despard.

"Behold, my adored one," whispered Contopolos, slipping one arm about Marie as he pointed with the other hand to the figures of his master and her mistress. "Behold the beautiful flowering of the century plants."

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## BEATEN TRACKS

BY MARGARET H. LAWLESS

SKY spaces have no beaten track  
Whereby the fledglings may come back;  
And they?—they never look behind  
Where empty nests swing in the wind.

The yellow path the children wore  
In the green stretch before the door  
Still shows a slender, curving thread;  
If with light step or with bent head

They come to seek a tardy rest,  
They will not find an empty nest;  
For, if they miss her form and face,  
The mother's spirit holds the place.

# THE 20TH CENTURY GERMAN

A NATION IN DECAY—GERMAN AIMS AND THEIR MESSAGE  
TO AMERICA—AN AMERICAN WOMAN'S IMPRESSIONS

By MAYNARD BUTLER

*[In the interests of neutrality—and justice, we may say—the reader of this article is recommended to give equal attention to the one which follows it. Each is written from a standpoint of honest prejudice by a qualified writer. Miss Butler has lived in Germany for several years, during which time she has contributed articles to German newspapers and magazines, and lectured at the Humboldt Institute under the Scientific Association of Berlin. This article and the one following were written only a short time before the sinking of the "Lusitania" by the Germans and the almost simultaneous appearance of the report of Viscount Bryce and his committee on the German atrocities in Belgium.—THE EDITOR.]*

A YOUNG officer in one of the Potsdam regiments, who was preparing to pass an examination, said to me in 1904:

"Just now our hardest work is in learning the Russian language, and the proper pronunciation and spelling of American harbors, mountains, and coast cities. So many of them are Indian names."

"But why on earth do they want you to learn them?" was my astonished reply.

"Because we shall probably be ordered there some day."

"Ordered where? To the United States?"

"Yes, at least that's what they tell us."

"But what for?"

At this my friend hesitated; then, with an apologetic blush, he said, "You don't expect to keep that big country for your own, do you?"

My amazement grew, but not unwilling to increase his evident embarrassment, I said, banteringly:

"You probably don't hurt yourself with work, learning the names! What do you know? Where is Portland, for instance?"

"Which Portland? There are two," came the reply, and I brought the conversation to a close. Remember, this was ten years ago, and contrast the information thus innocently given, with the assertions of the Berlin broker, Herr Bernhard Dernburg, to the effect that the German Emperor had never contemplated the slightest infringement of the Monroe Doctrine.

Again:—in 1907, an acquaintance, resident in Dresden, a "Freiherr," or Baron of the Saxon nobility, who was also an inventor, asked my aid in introducing him to the head of one of the great German metal-works, who happened to be a personal friend. He desired to obtain permission to test a certain part of one of his mechanical inventions, which, if done privately, would entail no small expense, but which, if done in a large manufactory, would require the use of machinery, for only a few moments. The permission was secured for him, and subsequently, on several occasions, I listened to his descriptions of his own and other inventions. On one occasion, he made the following statement: "You see,

nearly all of your great bridges on the south and west coast of the United States, were planned by us."

"Who, if you please, are 'us'?"

"We Germans," he replied, with bluster; "Of course you know that we really rebuilt the whole of the Galveston Harbor Works!"

"On what authority do you make that statement?"

"You don't believe it?"

"I asked on what authority?" I repeated. Whereupon, somewhat shamefacedly, but with the same air of conviction that had struck me in my officer friend, he replied: "On the highest authority, government authority! And, of course, it's true, for we shall probably want to use that port ourselves."

#### GERMANY'S AIM IN AMERICA

It is high time for Americans to realize that for the past sixteen years Germany has planned, intrigued against, and spied upon the United States, with the aim of eventually acquiring territory on the American Continent. The means employed have been always subtle, often sly, without exception devious, and generally wreathed in smiling flattery. That flattery! How it has amused those of us who lived in Germany in 1898, during our Spanish-American war! Never will they forget the scurrilous articles in the German press, the insolence of the German people, and the impertinent tone in German government and military circles, towards our country. The cause was not far to seek. Germany had hoped, and tried, to join Spain against the United States, but Spain, to the chagrin of the officious intruder, would none of her. Let Americans also never forget that Germany endeavored to create international friction, while the United States was engaged in nego-

tiating a treaty with Colombia in regard to the construction of the Panama Canal, and when—as Germany thought—the United States could not quell her plot. Let them remember, also, how Germany bought up a majority of one vote—literally one single vote—in the *Landsting*, or Danish Parliament, in October, 1902, when Denmark had agreed to sell her West Indian Islands to the United States, for one million dollars, and was very glad of the prospect of ridding herself of a burden. But Germany "wanted"—you see it is, as in the present war, what she "wants" that governs her actions—Germany "wanted" a coaling station on the Caribbean Sea, and she intended, as soon as possible, to wrest those West Indian Islands from Denmark, even as she had wrested Holstein from her, some years before. Let Americans look through a file of the leading articles of the representative newspapers of North Germany, such as the *Norddeutsche Allgemeine Zeitung*, the *Tageblatt* and the *Kölnische-Zeitung* from the year 1897 to the year 1906 and the plans and intrigues will unfold themselves with a clearness not to be obscured by the fulsome words put into the mouth of the German Emperor, now in 1914 and 1915. Such protestations following upon the destruction of Belgium are hardly likely to inspire confidence!

#### HYSTERIA A NATIONAL TRAIT

What, then, is the Twentieth Century German? The following facts, written after long residence in Germany, familiarity with the German language and literature, and acquaintance with German officials, members of the government, the army, the navy, and the faculties of German universities, form material from which to elucidate that question. The German of the Twentieth



Century, or in other words, the German who has lived under the present incumbent of the Prussianized throne, is, as every thoughtful European and American knows, a totally different human product from the German who lived under the manly, dignified, hard-working old King, Emperor William the First, who died in 1888!

In the first place, the old idea that Germans are phlegmatic must go. The present-day German, in the north, and more or less in the south, is nervous, irascible, quick to take offense; and, throughout the army and the class of professors, he is frequently hysterical. This statement is based not merely upon close observation but upon perusal of reports and personal experience, extending over a succession of years. And that this condition of overstrained nerves, over-taxed, badly-fed bodies, and ill-trained emotions, has reached the youngest generation is painfully attested by the appalling frequency of suicide among boys and girls of sixteen, seventeen and eighteen, in the higher schools, and even among little children of eight and nine, in the elementary schools.

Any traveler who has journeyed in a leisurely manner throughout not only the regulation routes but the country districts of the Black Forest, the Hartz Mountains, Thuringia, the Rhine Provinces and the Saxon Hills, must have been struck by the fact that the conversations which he heard in hotels, mountain inns, restaurants, railway-trains, on the street-cars, and even during the intervals between the pieces of music at concerts, and the acts of theaters, all turned upon "*Geld*"—money.

Discussion of public questions, of political issues, is not allowed. The police are instructed to watch any man who indulges in it. Expression of opinion upon the foreign policy

of the country, which occupies so prominent a place in the conversation and the thoughts of Americans, Englishmen, Frenchmen, Italians, is never heard among Germans in time of peace; and in time of war it is less than ever ventured upon, for not only imprisonment, but confiscation of property, might follow it. What takes place is ordered by the government, overseen by the Bureau of Secret Intelligence, executed by the Police. In view of this it is quite certain that the conduct of Berlin citizens on the twenty-ninth and thirty-first of July, 1914, in front of the British Embassy, was not without the tacit consent of the authorities. Contrasted with the courtesy and dignity of the British Government towards the German Ambassador in London, who was escorted to his train by members of the Foreign Office, exactly as he would have been in time of peace, and given safe conduct on board a British man-of-war to the coast of his own country, and with the noble generosity of the French Government, which presented the German Ambassador in Paris with an especial *train de luxe*, carrying him without a penny of expense to himself to his home; thus contrasted, the throwing of stones and the shrieking of vile epithets at the British Ambassador and his Staff, by German citizens; and the placing of German armed soldiers at either end of the railway train in which the French Ambassador and his family were seated, who, with fingers on their pistols, threatened to shoot, unless he then and there paid five thousand marks in gold, the coarse standards of life and low methods of conduct, which have been instilled into the German people for the past twenty-seven years stand out with startling clearness.

The constant contemplation of

petty details, in the mechanical round of daily existence, which occupies mature minds in Germany, amazes men of other countries. One asks oneself whether what Emerson called "the telescopic appreciation of distant gain," has blinded the German vision to all else. One is inclined to conclude so, when one looks over the field of philosophy, in which Germany was once great, or of literature, in which she had at least one half-century of greatness, and sees that she is producing little or nothing of value, in each of those branches of knowledge. Has growth in commerce crushed out intellectual growth? Or is the present generation reaping the fruits of repression, in stamping out the power, or the desire, to think as an individual, to live as a Man in his Manhood? How true is this impression is substantiated by the serious, the alarmed warnings of a few far-sighted Germans themselves, such as Professor Walter Schuecking, of the University of Marburg, whose recent work called forth a storm of protest from the Prussian authorities; or, like Professor Adolf Bartels, of Weimar, who, speaking before an enormous audience, on the eighteenth of January, 1913, alarmed his fellow Germans by the ominous words, "*Der Verfall Deutschlands*" (the decadence or fall of Germany) and declared that Germany was now, in the Twentieth Century, in a worse slavery than during the Napoleonic wars, one hundred years ago. The impassioned address, which was delivered in the city of Berlin, had as its kernel the solemn words: "Our soul is being stolen from us." (*Man stiehlt uns die Seele*). With what significance do they who listened to those words, in January, 1913, look back upon them now, in the midst of the horrors begun by Germany, in July, 1914!

#### SOME PHYSICAL DEFECTS

No one can spend much time in Germany without wondering at the heavy, loose-muscled bodies and the awkward gait of the men who, with rarest exceptions, have followed a military existence for from one to three years of their lives. Wherein does the physical strength, that the lay mind is accustomed to associate with an army-life, lie? Can—will the German army long endure? It is to be remembered that for 133 years it has had no tests of endurance applied to it. The Austro-Prussian war of 1866, and the Franco-Prussian war of 1870, were fought within a distance of about thirty-six hours from Berlin, and were finished within a few months, even weeks. No prolonged marches, no strange food, no cold climate, no torrid heat, no scarcity of water, no danger from sunstroke entered into those campaigns. The German soldiers in France, as far as physical tests go, were in a more agreeable environment, and had better food, than when at home. What would have happened to them, the careful observer asks, if they had been transported six thousand miles by sea, to a tropical heat, to life on the barren, waterless *veldt*, as were the British soldiers during the South African war!

One wonders whether these heavy, loose-muscled men, and their stoutish, puffy-eyed officers, drilled to home exactions, realize their provincialism—whether their instructors, strategists and chiefs of staff comprehend what power of deterioration long drawn out starvation and thirst have upon an army; whether they themselves with their irascibility and lack of emotional self-control, could endure such a strain; whether the vigorously-nourished affection for Austria, which preceded the present German attack

upon the nations of Europe, had, as its secret aim, the hope of making the Austrian troops bear the brunt of the privations, sufferings, and other tests of endurance, pitted against the Russians, and dragged into the Polish marshes and snows—Austria to bleed and endure, while Germany kept in the milder, better-fed regions of France and Belgium, and vociferated self-praises of "*Mich und meine Armee?*" Is Austria, indeed, already beginning to find this to be the fact? With Vienna filled with maimed, hungry soldiers, prisoners stricken with cholera, typhoid and dysentery; with many of her best officers retiring from the army altogether, rather than submit their command to a German intruder; with her treasury strained to the utmost, and her populace weary with disgust, sorrow and chagrin, what wonder that one asks the question!

#### WOMEN AND "SOCIETY"

Of the appearance of German women, a traveler from the United States, France, England, or Italy, can only express regret that material—if one may so designate the human form—so in need of improvement, should not receive it. In almost every other country in Europe, the cut of the features, the tone of the voice, the manner, the habits at table, the *ensemble* of the woman of the better class is different from that of the woman of the middle and the lower middle class; in Germany, careful scrutiny fails to reveal a difference, save in isolated cases. That something which we call distinction, does not exist in Germany. If clothes alone were the criterion, the advantage would usually be on the side of the Jewish women, who often exhibit themselves in beautiful gowns.

The dictum of the foreign wife of a German nobleman, that there is no

*Society* in Germany, is more or less true. In the American, English, and French sense of the word, there is none. There are families who go to Court, once or twice a year, usually in the months of January and February; there are city officials, who are commanded to appear, on the so-called Black Eagle Order Day; there are certain of the highest army and navy officers, who defile past the Throne upon New Year's Day; and those of a lower grade, who, at a later date, walk past the same Royal Seat, at the military reception, usually the second Court function of the winter season; there is one dinner given at the Palace to the members of the Federal Council and the Imperial Cabinet, and another to the President and Political Chiefs of the Prussian Landtag and the Imperial Reichstag; there are two, sometimes three, balls; and sometimes, one State Concert. All this, in the national capital of Berlin, is reproduced in miniature, and with certain features peculiar to themselves, in each of the kingdoms, grand duchies, duchies, and principalities, belonging to the Federation; but it all affects very little the interchange of the courtesies and charms of life, amongst families. Of those officers who attend the regular military reception, many, indeed, most of their wives and daughters have never been within the Palace doors. The only circle of cultivated life in Germany that answers, in any sense, to our word "Society," is formed by the chiefs of foreign embassies and legations, with their councilors and attachés, their families and their guests, usually persons of distinction from their own countries, the diplomatic representatives of the German States, and the Vatican, and the members of the Imperial Cabinet. But even amongst them in Germany, nothing like the charm

of intercourse obtains which is to be found in the Diplomatic corps, in London, Paris or other capitals.

Differences in pronunciation and enunciation, which are so clearly defined in the socially cultivated and the non-socially cultivated in France and England, are hardly to be expected in Germany. The reason for the fact lies partly in the structure of the language itself, which has no silent letters or syllables, and offers little opportunity for gradations of inflection, and partly in the structure of the social order, which is divided less into classes, than into groups or castes as well as in the character of the people as a whole, whose minds make no demand upon nobility of bearing, and whose ears are not trained to refinement of voice or intonation.

In visiting the public institutions of Germany, it is a source of constant surprise to an American to find how meager are the collections of modern scientific and technical works, and works in belles-lettres, published during the past fifty years, to be found even in the Royal or chief libraries. To come from the National Library in Washington, or the British Museum in London, to the Royal Library in Berlin, is like entering a village after living in a great city. True, the latter is only a Prussian, not an imperial library; nevertheless, it is the library of the capital of the Empire, and its methods are regarded as representative. It lends books, which, in Europe, is the sign manual of a not overwhelmingly precious collection; and then, as if to contradict the very purpose of its existence, it requires a fee from university men and not from the general public; readers are obliged to fetch and carry their own books from the general desk, and sometimes wait with them piled, high and dusty, while the few attend-

ants attempt to receive and stamp the reading cards of hundreds of people; there are no blotters, pens or paper to be had on the premises. There are no racks for the readers' books; the lights are so placed as to heat one's head and blur one's eyes; the ventilation is so planned that in the winter one sits either in a suffocating, exceedingly unhealthy air, or in a draft.

#### GERMAN "MANNERS"

It was said of St. Patrick's pilgrimage to Ireland, that he killed all the snakes in the country, *but that there were none!* The Hibernianism occurs to one in speaking of the "manners" of Germany—there are none. There are certainly "customs" enough and to spare; but breeding! Nothing strikes an American, an English or a French visitor more than the universal lack of courtesy of the people towards one another, in public places and in their homes. It was long ago said by Goethe—the sentence occurs, I believe, in his "Aphorisms," and is first found in "Faust"—"When a German is polite he is lying." (*Wenn ein Deutscher höflich ist, lügt er.*) And that great poet certainly knew his own people. In the railway carriages, street cars, concert halls, cloak-rooms of the opera house and the theaters, in the thoroughfares, and even in the churches, the North German universally, and the South German intermittently, seems to have left his home in the morning with a feeling of aggressiveness, as of one who is sure that somebody is going to do him a wrong, which he must forestall by dealing out the vengeance which, if the wrong should be done, he would employ. Scenes of indescribable behavior occur daily in the streets. So inured to an impertinent attitude towards themselves, in public places, are the women of the cities, that they appear to have

lost the feeling of self-respect, and permit looks, words and acts, which, in other countries, are never seen, heard, or tolerated among respectable people. During the winter of 1909, in Berlin, an elderly woman of the middle class crossed the narrow strip of road between the curbstone and the street car, and reaching the car, grasped the metal bar to mount the steps, when a man behind her attempted to push her aside, but finding that his shove did not succeed, he deliberately struck her wrist a blow with his cane. Her cry of pain and the dastardly brutality of the fellow elicited not one word of remonstrance from the men on the platform, nor did the conductor interfere! This was in the Leipziger Strasse, one of the best business streets, corresponding to Regent Street in London, and exactly opposite the doors of the Ministry of War. Treading on the toes of their fellow-passengers, looking over the shoulder of a neighbor who is reading, turning over the labels of passengers' luggage to find out their names, shouting out private messages in the street, discussing the most intimate pathological details in public conveyances, and other acts, too offensive to be described in words, are constantly committed by well-dressed Germans. In their homes, mothers scream at their servants, and address their children in a tone incredible until it is heard. A man will interrupt his friend in the middle of a sentence without apology of any sort. A husband will tell his wife that she is lying, with an insolence that baffles description. A dinner party, if listened to from outside, sounds like the game called "shouting down." A prolonged argument, without personalities, and often insulting personalities, is unknown, whether it be held in the Reichstag or in the University Hall.

For objective discussion, with the give and take so natural to Americans and Englishmen, the German does not possess the capacity. For the word "gentlemanly" he has no equivalent in his language.

The same tone is conspicuous in the press. One of the chief newspapers in Berlin fills its columns, day after day, with statements in which the whole facts are never given, are, indeed, intentionally suppressed, and conclusions are drawn which are absolutely controverted by the suppressed half. This paper purports to be the most lofty-minded of its colleagues. Another paper, which is the mouth-piece of the so-called religious element in Prussia and is rich in references to the Almighty, has lately published an article which directly advocates the stealing of the finest works of art which are left intact in Belgium. The *Lokal-Anzeiger* of Berlin, which was bought up by the government about eight months before the attack on Belgium, publishes, daily, articles, which in their hideous coarseness are hardly human. They read like the emanations of some animal that has licked blood. One of these lies before me, which is unfit to print in the English language. Remember, this paper is hired by the highest authorities of Germany to feed the reading public! Is it a wonder that the nations of the earth smile, when Germany vociferates her "Culture!" Culture! As well might the Fiji Islander proclaim his "culture," when in the act of tearing his victim to pieces, preparatory to his cannibal meal!

Another token of German culture! In the town of Freiburg in Breisgau, the seat of a university and of several college schools, a certain "professor" in a *Realschule*, or classical school in which modern languages supplant Greek, by name Fritz Ludin, has published a "song"



for himself and his pupils, the words of which are set to music by the Director of the subsidised theater of Freiburg. He entitles it: "*Hau sie, Lieber Gott!*" (Butcher them, dear God!) That Americans may comprehend what sort of men are placed over growing boys and girls in Germany, now, in the Twentieth Century, and what sort of ideas are promulgated by the German Ministry of Public Instruction, now, during the present war, I hereby subjoin a few lines of this work. The omissions indicate words too filthy to print.

"*Hau sie, Lieber Gott!*" (Butcher them, dear God!)

The bugs they bite the French again,  
And make the gendarmes writhe in pain.  
Lice through their heads do play about,  
Let's clean the dirty devils out.

..... *oder besser* .....  
Pull off their skins, with might and main.

And the Russian is a hog,  
Who always was a pig for grog.  
Pull out their gullets, one and all,  
Pour in schnapps, until they fall.  
..... *oder besser* .....  
Pickle them in alcohol.

Then in England, by the way,  
Lives the Herr Minister Grey.  
Beefsteak chaws he, raw and red,  
Knock the dastard glutton dead.  
..... *oder besser* .....  
Carve him to a meaty shred.

A masterly production, is it not?  
What wonder, I repeat, that the nations of the earth laugh in contempt at Germany's self-boasting of "culture!"

He who looks for causes, who knows that behavior such as that in Berlin towards the highest representatives of France and England; the beastialities in Belgium that followed that behavior; the inhuman cruelty, in shooting at the passengers and sailors of the *Falaba*; who realizes that results such as these are impelled by potent qualities, qualities

which lie at the very roots of the German character, cannot repress amusement, as well as pain, at the involuntary unfolding of that character, offered almost daily, by German professors, teachers and preachers, in and out of Germany, in the attempt to juggle themselves out of the appalling responsibility which rests upon them and theirs. As if broken treaties, lying protestations, brutal behavior, acts too atrocious to attribute to animals, murder of innocent voyagers, the trampling of justice underfoot, stopping the trial of the criminal Eulenburg—as if these, and many other outrages against all that is true, honorable, good, just, and pure, could spring from anything but dishonorable minds, coarseness of spirit, and sensuality, long inculcated, long glossed over, long directly taught!

#### SOME GERMAN PEDAGOGUES

In the autumn of 1910, the Master of Mathematics, in one of the chief *Gymnasias* for boys (classical preparatory schools), in the city of Berlin, was arrested and brought to trial, and when confronted by his victims, shot himself dead in the courtroom.

Shortly before that, the *Rector* (Head Master) of a school for girls, also in the city of Berlin, directly under the shadow of the Ministry of Public Instruction, was sentenced to the penitentiary for a succession of unspeakable crimes, *continued during a period of ten years*, without interruption by that Ministry, by the School Board of the District, or even by the Police, although it developed in the trial, that both the janitor, and the police, had known of the horror for more than six years.

In 1909, in Charlottenburg, the wealthiest quarter of Berlin, one of the head teachers in the chief *Real-Gymnasium* wore out the endurance

of two of the most promising pupils, boys of seventeen and eighteen, to the extent of driving them to the desperate decision to kill themselves, *which they did on the same day*. I say that these cases, the frequency of suicide, as described at the beginning of this article, and the revelations of the drunken habits and vile tyrannies of the last-named teacher are in themselves sufficient to condemn any national system of education; but, joined to the fact that the said Charlottenburg teacher was nevertheless retained in the school, such cases amount to an indictment. That such a man could be placed and could be kept over growing boys year after year, and that the boys dared not complain, lest the miserable creature should prevent them from passing the dreaded final examination and ruin their whole future careers as professional men, points with menacing finger. Small wonder that so long as such "symptoms" obtain, a thousand and one minor sinister tokens are to be noted. Such, for instance,

as the illustrations exposed for sale, in the most conspicuous places, on the newspaper stands, at the railway stations, and even in the windows of the best book shops, which are so foul of import that one stands aghast. Or the stone decorations of the facades, on the posts of the entrance doors, and the balustrades of the stairways, of almost all the finest houses in the best quarters of Berlin; figures which can only be compared to the statuettes and decorations dug up in Pompeii, which we know to have been the insignia of brothels in that fated city. Yet I never heard a protest against this architecture from any German parent, teacher or preacher. "A people is," said a great writer, "what it enjoys." A truth that no nation can afford to forget.

What then, is the Twentieth Century German? Let the foregoing facts, the mental gyrations, and ethical twistings and turnings, of German preachers, teachers and propaganda purveyors; and the devastated homes, libraries, architecture and churches of Belgium reply.

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## NIGHT AND MORNING

BY ANTOINETTE DECOURSEY PATTERSON

WITH silent step she glides upon our view,  
Her form close-wrapped in star-sewn domino.  
A sleepy moon bids her unmask, and lo,  
A laughing goddess all in gold and blue!

# THE MUCH-MALIGNED GERMAN

AN ANSWER TO "THE TWENTIETH CENTURY GERMAN"—  
WHAT AN AMERICAN JOURNALIST THINKS

By EDWARD LYELL FOX

Author of "Behind the Scenes in Warring Germany."

*[The author of the following has had extraordinary facilities for studying the German people. During the four months he spent with the Kaiser's armies on both the eastern and western frontiers he was brought in contact with the fighting German, while his experiences in the cities and towns of the interior afforded him large opportunities for observation and study.—THE EDITOR.]*

AN officer of the United States Army detailed to Germany for purposes of military observation, said to me in the Hotel Adlon, Berlin, on March 6, 1915:

"I envy your having been in East Prussia. I want so much to go there."

"What's the use?" I replied, "you won't see any fighting. They've got the Russians all cleaned out by now."

He smiled. "It is not the fighting I care about seeing," he said, "it is the country."

And he went on to tell me that in the War College of the United States Army his class had in theory fought over the entire Masurian lake region and that for two years he had had an idea of his own as to how the battle of Tannenburg would be fought were he in command! Every habitable place in East Prussia was known to this United States officer. He knew the topography of that country as well as he knew the country around Fort Leavenworth, U.S.A. And he made no secret of it. He had the military viewpoint.

Apparently a good many people are utterly without this. They are so busy collecting dollars, that they do not think the other thing worth while, and when military questions arise,

they become hysterical. Every efficient army in the world knows in its General Staff, the topography of other nations. In the War Colleges of France, England, Germany, Russia, Italy, Austria, the United States, and Japan—to mention the more prominent—certain officers study certain problems. So it was with the young officer of one of the Potsdam regiments who showed to Miss Butler such familiarity with the United States. It is inconceivable to me that the writer of that incident could have lived so long in Germany without discerning the fact that Prussian officers are not the stupid boasting bullies that clever press campaigns have led us to believe; but that, instead, they are charmingly courteous and possessed of keen senses of humor; in America we would call them "kidders." I strongly suspect that the officer who said that he expected to be ordered to the United States for an invasion was a "kinder." Officers of the Great General Staff in Berlin have shown me that they have an amazing familiarity with our country; it is but a part of their military training; the same as it is a part of the training of my friend in the United States Army to know East Prussia.

Last January I was having luncheon with von Arnim's staff in a French château near Lille. In all seriousness a Prussian Ober-Lieutenant said to me, "You must excuse us out here. In war it is very difficult to get proper food. We have to do the best we can. Our meat is scarce. To-day we are having a ragout made out of Belgian babies." Without a smile he added hastily: "But you are much more fortunate than you would be lunching with the Second Bavarian Army Corps. They are using old French women and they are very tough."

I wonder how many persons eager to hear evil of the Germans, their minds hysterical with war, would have believed that story. I ate the luncheon and I assure you it was not of young Belgian babies.

Let me tell of another Prussian officer, a captain. A Belgian girl told me this story on the steamer coming to America. She lived in Dinant.

"This officer," she said, "was quartered in our house; he tried to make love to me (which reminds me of a story the girls in Brussels tell—When do the atrocities begin?). I told him that the Germans were murderers; to my amazement he agreed with me. I told him that they had cut off the hands of a baby."

"Did you see that baby or its hands?" I asked her.

She had not but she was quite sure of it for the servant in the house next door had told her; which is the story you get all around Belgium, somebody "next door" saw it. Irvin Cobb, Will Irwin, James O'Donnell Bennett and I at different times investigated such stories and were unable to find a single proven case. But to continue with "the brute of a Prussian officer."

"I told him about the baby with its hands cut off," she said to me, "and he looked at me with a cruel smile.

"'Do you know who cut off that baby's hands?' the officer asked. I told him that I would find out.

"'Don't trouble yourself,' he had the audacity to tell me. 'The man who mutilated that child is standing before you.'"

And that girl believed that story and she is telling it to everybody in the United States whom she meets. And another chapter is added to the wild history of Belgium.

Perhaps the Germans have themselves to blame for this. Perhaps they should not play too far upon credulous people. But the whole affair is such a joke to the officers in the German army that they cannot help talking about it lightly.

#### THE GERMAN ATTITUDE TOWARD US

Twice with extreme care and growing amazement I have read a paper published in the same issue of this magazine on the German of today. Early, the writer disparagingly speaks of Bernhard Dernburg as "the Berlin broker"; Dernburg was a Colonial Minister of the German Empire. I have read in astonishment of the baron of the Saxon nobility who in 1907 said Germany would probably want to use the harbor of Galveston! Granted that Germany did want to invade the United States, which is too ridiculous to imagine, for it is only a simple point of world politics that Germany would never dare send a big army to the United States for the obvious reason that the moment her troops were in mid-Atlantic her enemies on all sides would at once attack her. Regarding the construction of the Galveston Harbor works, Steinmetz, an American, had one of the largest jobs in connection with the Galveston wall. *He was employed by the United States Government.* I cannot see how this fact fits in with the statement that the Germans built it.

I know Mr. Steinmetz personally.

To go back to the days of the Spanish-American War is to try and re-open an old sore. If one is to open it, why not wide? Why omit the German Admiral von Dietrich's actions toward Dewey in Manila Bay. There the German attitude was arrogant; there was no question about it. Why not also say that Germany sold Mauser rifles and ammunition to the Spaniards; Germany did—but wait a moment.

Look first at the von Dietrich incident in the calm light of diplomatic history. In view of the statement of our government that we would not keep the Philippines, Germany feared that we were going to turn over the islands to England and therefore sought to intimidate us. As soon as Germany recognized, though, that we were on the same plane as other Powers she drew in her horns. For the von Dietrich incident, Germany is quite frank in making no excuses to-day. To back up Spain was at the time part of her foreign policy. Now after war broke out in 1898, Germany sent *one* shipload of ammunition and guns to the Spaniards. Washington protested and the German Emperor at once ordered all further shipments to cease. Wilhelm II did *not* say to the United States, "You are at liberty to buy as well as Spain." He arbitrarily put the mailed fist down on the supply of ammunition to our enemies. Then with the coming of Roosevelt to the Presidency, followed by the visit of Prince Henry of Prussia to the United States—a visit inspired by Wilhelm II—Manila Bay was forgotten. Those two big men, Roosevelt and the German Emperor, got together and created an understanding between Germany and the United States. From that day England has tried to break the bond and at present seems to have succeeded.

Why take it to heart that German machinations prevented Denmark from selling her West Indies to the United States; why charge Germany with wanting to obtain a coaling station in the Caribbean sea? Why not a German coaling station? Great Britain has one in the Island of Jamaica, *a second Gibraltar that is commanding the entrance to the Panama Canal*. England has another coaling station at Bermuda, another in the Bahamas. But let Germany try to get one coaling station, only one, and people become hysterical. Of course, it's perfectly all right for England to have one. England has always been so friendly to the United States. She showed that in the War of 1812; she burned the capitol at Washington; in 1860, when with the Union fighting for its very existence she outfitted Confederate privateers which swept the commerce of our young Republic from the seas—which is precisely what England wanted, for does not Britannia rule the waves? Again, our cousins in England helped us in the Venezuelan affair, doing their utmost to embarrass our State Department and more recently in Mexico when the British oil interests inspired the overthrow of Madero and backed up Huerta, whom Earl Grey knew to be objectionable to President Wilson. Remember that in Parliament two years ago Winston Churchill, First Lord of the British Admiralty, made a speech in which he said that inasmuch as oil was going to be the future fuel of the navy, Great Britain should at once take steps to secure every known source of oil supply in the world. And by that Churchill meant the regions around the Panama Canal, northern South America, and Central America. For as Sir George Armstrong said at a dinner in London to a friend of mine, "You know that we English are looking with jealous—ahem, I mean to say



interested eyes at the Panama Canal."

I merely cite these instances in relation to Germany's desire some day to obtain the Danish West Indies so that she might have a *single* coaling station in a zone where Great Britain now has *three*.

I have read the German newspapers. I have read them during this war. I have seen attacks both in pictures and in words upon the United States and they have all turned upon one thing—the selling of ammunition to the Allies. The Germans do not forget that they stopped selling to Spain when Washington protested in 1898. Altogether since this war began, we have gained a terrible impression of the Germans. In some amazing way a nation of which we have always thought as being composed of very likable people, home lovers, friend lovers, Christmas lovers, a nation, whose people are continually exchanging gifts, is shown to us as a land of fiends, their hands dripping with the blood of Belgium. One is continually asked if a nation that invaded Belgium can inspire confidence? Again the impossibility to understand the military point of view. As Governor General von Bissing told me, "We invaded Belgium for purely military reasons. We thought England would attack us from the rear, if we did not cover that line first. In any case we judged the invasion of Belgium essential to our strategy. I justify it on purely military grounds. When a nation is in a war for its existence no other grounds are worth talking about."

Pause and analyze that frank utterance and you will see it is nothing but commonsense. The United States needed the Panama Canal. Thank Heaven we had a big man for President, a man whom you can call anything but a hypocrite. Ruthlessly and cleverly, Roosevelt planned

and carried out a revolt in the Republic of Colombia and thereby made the canal possible. If he had not done this we would still be waiting to build the canal. It is simply the old doctrine, that the end justifies the means; which any big man will follow where his country's interests are at stake.

#### WAR AND THE PRESS AGENTS

The Germans are not good press agents. Until this war they had not spent a cent in this country on propaganda. England had. Two years ago Lord Northcliffe made his famous trip to America and arranged things. It came about that the Berlin correspondents of many American papers were English or English owned. There is one American in particular who sold himself to a big London daily. Brand Whitlock, our Minister to Belgium, characterized him: "The man is a rat and a disgrace to journalism." That man is helping to form American public opinion. France began to get ready also. I have before me a lurid cartoon made by Maurice Neumont and printed in Paris. It is called "*Les Assassins!*" It shows Wilhelm II and Franz Joseph advancing in a path of blood, trampling on treaties, with dripping daggers in their hands. It announces in the lower left hand corner that this picture is the first of a series under the general title of 1914! that "will be continued during the war attacking the atrocities of the Barbarians against the people who battle courageously for the sacred cause of right, civilization and liberty." This picture is exceedingly interesting. The copy I have was purchased by P. Dettenhofer of Freysing, Bavaria. P. Dettenhofer I know personally to be a reputable man. *He bought this picture in Nizza, in Southern France, on August 1, 1914.*

Think what that means—*August first*. It took Maurice Neumont, the artist, at least a day to make this picture. It took another day for the printing and color work, it took another day to transport it from Paris to Nizza. That brings the date back to July twenty-eighth. War was not declared until *after* August first. Belgium was not invaded until *after* August first. This means that five days before war began, the French were all prepared to characterize the Germans as assassins and barbarians.

That incident is one phase of the war that America will know after peace is declared. It is the press agent's part in the war. It is the beginning of the attacks upon the German character.

Whenever I think of the Barbarians in Belgium, I think of this order given in the Second Battalion of the Royal Scotch Fusiliers. It was found in the pockets of a captured Scotch officer. I saw the original and copied it verbatim.

FR Routine orders

oc. B Coy II Battalion Royal Scotch Fusiliers.

- 3 Discipline: Numerous cases have occurred in which houses occupied by British troops have been ransacked and much damage done. It must be remembered that our Troops are operating in the country of our Allies.

Think of the hideous unspoken thing, therein. Obviously the inference is that when the British leave the country of their Allies and get on German soil, they may do anything they like. When Louvain was vacated by the Belgians an English war correspondent, leaving in a hurry, left behind him a war sketch that he had made of the square around the Hotel de Ville. I have a copy of this sketch before me. In his own handwriting, with an arrow pointing to the towers of that beautiful City Hall, the Englishman has marked "*Mitrailleuse mounted here.*"

In another part of the sketch he has written, "*Mitrailleuses and sharp shooters in lantern of cathedral.*" In five captured books of the English General Staff, taken in the battle of Mons, I saw that every church in Belgium had been marked as an observation post. Yet, early in the war, the English raised the cry against the Germans for firing upon church steeples. I am merely presenting both sides of the story.

LOUVAIN "THE LOST" AND OTHERS

Permit me to quote a neutral correspondent of the Stockholm *Aftonbladet* describing his recent visit to Louvain.

To judge from English newspaper reports, Louvain had practically disappeared from the surface of the earth. The English have said a great deal about the sacking of Louvain. But Louvain has not been stormed nor plundered and not destroyed. The truth is that Louvain is in a comparatively good condition and that the inhabitants there do not seem to be at all discouraged. Much has been said in the English press of the destruction of St. Peter's Cathedral in Louvain. We visited this Cathedral and admired the works of art which have been placed in it. Some of them have been placed in a safe place in the city by art-loving German officers. In general I received the impression that this cathedral can be restored without incurring very great expense.

I, too, have seen Louvain; it is but one-twelfth gone—the twelfth being that section where the uprising was.

"The Twentieth Century German" is different from the German of the time of Emperor Wilhelm I. He is not phlegmatic; he is nervous. Americans and Frenchmen are nervous on the exterior, Germans more deeply so. It does not surprise me that German youths have taken their own lives. The average German is better educated than the average inhabitant of any other country in Europe. Often he thinks introspectively, despite the fact that those who

generalize like to say there is no individuality in Germany. Nor does it surprise me that an occasional German teacher is degenerate. In Boston not so long ago we had a degenerate minister and in New York a degenerate priest. Nor does it surprise me that you hear people all over Germany, talking about money. Have you ever heard such conversations in our own country?

In Germany, even in these hectic days of war, I have heard free opinions in public places on the foreign and military policies of the Empire. It is a joke in Berlin that in all the big cafés you can find men sitting around tables telling just how they would conduct the campaigns; they are called the "beer strategists."

The demonstration in front of the British Embassy was emphatically not done with the consent of the authorities, for the crowds were driven away. The French Ambassador himself has denied the story Miss Butler quotes that he was robbed of 5,000 marks in gold.

#### SOME MISCONCEPTIONS EXPLODED

Why defend German culture? Culture is universal. Every nation does its part. I know that men of the theater from the United States, England and France, visit Germany to study and take away with them the latest thing that Max Rheinhardt is doing. I also know that any American manager will tell you, "play Shakespeare and you go broke." Berlin in war time had two theaters playing Shakespeare, one doing Ibsen and another the Greek classics; and these theaters were full every night. All the opera houses and concert halls were doing good business. Even the Socialists of Germany who cry, "our soul is being stolen from us" vigorously deny that the empire has ceased to progress in the things of the mind. Of course, it is a matter of personal

taste, but the men of Germany did not impress me as having an awkward gait. Instead, the military German—what able-bodied German is not of the army at one time or another?—impressed me as having a square to his shoulders and a military snap and swing to his walk that was quite a relief from the slouching gaits that you see along our own Broadway. Military service does not make a man round shouldered; it brings his chin high and puts a premium on good health.

Without any knowledge of military things, persons try to criticize the endurance of the German army. They speak of stout, puffy-eyed officers and I have read a thing like this, "the hope of making the Austrian troops bear the brunt of the privations, sufferings and other tests of endurance, pitted against the Russians and dragged into the Polish marshes and snows."

It is not right that a person who is so utterly uninformed about military matters should be permitted publicly to slander in that way. It almost makes one regret the power of free speech. I have been with the German armies in Russia. As to their endurance, at this writing the Allies have for nearly nine months tried to break the western line; up to this writing without success. In Russia in the middle of a February snowstorm, the German soldiers by forced marches covered one hundred and twenty kilometers in two days, an almost unheard-of feat of endurance. I followed on the heels of that march in an automobile, unable to make it on foot because, like thousands of other unprepared Americans, I have never had military training and when war comes I shall, until I am prepared, be quite useless. I know something about the fighting of the Austrians against the Russians and how much the Germans have

made them bear "the brunt of privations." Twice General von Hindenburg had to abandon his movement against Warsaw, each time when success seemed almost in his grasp, because the Austrian line collapsed. Twice von Hindenburg had quickly to transport from four to five army corps sending them down into the Bukovina because the Austrians could not hold their line themselves. It is not the Austrians who are doing the bulk of the fighting in Poland. I know these things from personal observation; I have been at the front.

Poor Austria! A pitiful figure indeed. By the terms of the Triple Alliance Germany stood by her, when the paws of the Russian bear reached out to grab Slavish land. What a pitiful figure Austria presents—in the news dispatches from London. Disease-ridden, bankrupt, her people in revolt—and yet the Russians have not been able to cross the Carpathians. Any man informed on diplomacy would tell you that were it not for Germany's help the crazy quilt of the Austro-Hungarian Empire would to-morrow be torn up and thrown to Russia, the Balkans and Italy.

In Germany distinction does exist. It exists both with the men and with the women. It would seem as though human nature is often judged by the clothes it wears. That there is no society in Germany is more or less true. As a General Staff officer said to me one night, when we were eating in a little restaurant—although he is a man of big name and means—"We have not the club system in Germany. We officers drop in here where it is reasonable and anybody can afford it. When a young officer is appointed to his regiment he must eat the thirty-cent dinner of the officer's mess unless he is invited out somewhere. He cannot be an officer of that regiment unless

all the other officers want him." Which strikes one as being rather democratic.

#### GERMAN MANNERS AND MORALS

I am amazed at those who say the real Germans are not polite; of course, they mean a certain class of individuals. You will find impolite people everywhere—in New York for instance. Who in Germany, does not know the words, "*Bitte*," "*BITTESCHÖN*." You hear them continually. Literally they mean, "Please" and "Please beautiful." You thank a man in the store when he hands you your change and he at once murmurs, "*BITTESCHÖN*." You tip a waiter in the restaurant and he does not pocket the money with the air of proprietorship shown by every waiter in the United States, but he says, "*Danke viel mals*." You give your ticket to the railroad conductor and he thanks you at length. I got so sick of being thanked, I longed for somebody to be rude.

Herbert Corey and I dined with the Staff of Excellence von Eichorn, on the night of his big victory in Russia. After sitting with the polite German officers we told each other that we were a couple of boors. We actually felt uncomfortable because we had not the same politeness that these men showed and I do not think that we are louts.

A superficial observer does not grasp the very essential fact about the German character, that it hates hypocrisy. Unthinkingly, one says that the women appear to have lost self respect. That is not so. I know too many charming German women. They are merely a little more frank; however, virtue with the average woman is the same in every civilized country in the world. And it is just as much a crime against the Germans to say that their women have lost self respect as it is to declare French

women to be immoral. Any one who really knows France will say that the women are moral. It is a mistake to judge a country by its capital. Think of New York being the United States!

Everybody knows of the incident of the old woman in Berlin who was struck getting on the car in 1909. It was the one known case of the kind which is why it is so popular a story. I could not find any difference between the traveling crowds in Germany and the traveling crowds of the New York subways. Nor could I find women who screamed at their servants louder than they do in America, or men who interrupt conversations without apologies; or husbands who tell their wives that they are lying; or arguments that bring on personalities. I think that it is decidedly unfair to take the human race, take all its defects and say they are typically German. For every breach of bad manners and boorishness described by those who dislike Germans, one can find a similar breach in any civilized country in the world, not perhaps in barbaric countries, because barbarians have not had the civilization to be impolite.

The *Lokal Anzeiger*, a Berlin newspaper, is called "hideously coarse," a liar and something to the effect that its printed words are the emanations of some animal that has licked blood. Have you read my exposures of the Russian atrocities in East Prussia? They also are hideously coarse and bloody; and they are the truth.

I, too, know the poem, "Butcher Them, Dear God." It is typical of the excited human being in time of war. It is not because that human being is a German; it is simply because he is a human being and that the hysteria of war has possessed him. I also know of a French war poem, too lascivious for these pages;

but why blame the French character for that? In war, man reverts. Let me present a line from another sweet German poem, "God Strike Us If England We Spare." Hardly filled with the sentiment of world brotherhood, is it? Hardly something that would be written by disciples of the Great Teacher? But it seems to be rather significant that every nation is going into this war with blood-dripping swords and killing in the name of the Prince of Peace. So why talk about gun-shattered churches?

The invasion of Belgium, the sinking of passenger steamers, all those terrible things are not German; they are war. Imagine what would happen to an American writer if after the Civil War he called General Sherman's army murderers. Yet the march from Atlanta to the sea was just as bad as the invasion of Belgium. I had a United States sergeant tell me, "I used to take pot shots at the Filipinos." Good enough! That soldier killed because it was necessary. We had to terrify the country. It was a phase of war.

Germany announced that any ship venturing into a certain war zone was apt to get into trouble. It was part of her naval policy to terrify English shipping. A little side light on the *Falaba* incident may not be inappropriate. The German submarine captain ordered the captain of that British steamer to put his passengers in the boats. Instead the *Falaba* sent a wireless call for help. The only thing for the submarine to do was to fire the torpedo and disappear in the sea. That civilians were drowned is regrettable. Sailing on an English boat during war time, they did so at their own risk. Why be foolishly sentimental about it?

#### A SIDELIGHT ON ATROCITIES

There is an impression to-day that



the Germans as a race have run amuck. Because of their submarine warfare, this has gained ground in the United States. But instead of being excited about this, the Germans are coldly calm; they are even analytical. Early in February, just before Tirpitz's submarine blockade went into effect, I had a long talk with one of the foremost scientists of Germany.

"You say that neutral states have rights to carry on commerce," he said in relation to the Tirpitz edict. "You also say that the press has the right to obtain the news. What is the reason for commerce? What is the reason for the news? Money—in both cases. Don't try to deny it. You know that in the last analysis that the motive of your being in Germany, or any other reporter being in any other place, is money—I am not at all personal, but if money were not to be made out of what you have written it would not be printed. You go out to the front; you do not belong there; it is a war zone. If anything happens to you, it is your own fault. Now then, we inform the neutral states that the water around the British Isles is a war zone. We tell them that any ship venturing in that water does so at its own risk," and the scientist shrugged. "Stay out and you won't get your fingers burned. Don't rush in where you're told there is fire. It's very simple, isn't it? You as a correspondent have this right of the press to obtain the news; if you get hit nothing is said. Mr. Jones of New York as a merchant, has a right to carry on business with our enemy. If his ship gets hit there's nothing to be said. Admiral Tirpitz has advised all shipping to keep out; if fools go in they take the consequences."

Now, that is one of the best revelations of the modern German that I found. It is frank, confident and reasonable. There is behind it the

power that the German nation feels. As another high German put it to me, "We want to be friends with the United States. We thought we were. If you don't want our friendship it's purely a matter of personal taste. We're ready to come half way. Since this war began we've gone more than half way."

To give you another insight into the Twentieth Century German, let me quote from a letter written to Sir Arthur Conan Doyle by James O'Donnell Bennett of the *Chicago Tribune*, one of the most accurate reporters in America.

"I thought it a beautiful thing to see my friend Captain Franz von Kempis of the Königin-Augusta-Grenadier-Regiment No. 4 standing uncovered on a chill October afternoon before the grave of the French officer who to-day is known throughout the German armies in northern France as 'the brave Alvares.' That soldier was commander of the Fort des Ayvelles near Charleville and when the garrison refused to make the stand against the Germans which he felt its honor demanded he killed himself. The victors buried him with military honors in a lovely evergreen grove behind the fort, and over his grave they erected a beautiful cross fashioned with patient skill from wood. And that cross bears this inscription in German text:

Here rests the brave commandant.

He was not able to live longer than the Fortress entrusted to him.

By this simple cross of wood the German soldier honors in thee the hero of duty.

Second Landwehr Pioneers Company  
of the eighth Army Corps.  
Sept. 1914.

"Some day in happier times I hope to show you the photograph of this shrine-place under the evergreens. In late October the German Wachmeister in charge of the little force

guarding Ayvelles was keeping the grave green with fresh boughs.

"It seemed to me a beautiful thing to see French soldiers kissing the hands of German doctors who ministered to them in the hospital at Laon, and I have seen few finer, sweeter deeds in my life than the action of a German doctor who placed an arm under the back of a suffering and distraught Frenchman and, drawing him to his breast, said, 'I give you my word that you are not going to die, but you must help me to make you well by keeping yourself calm.'

"Two big tears rolled down the Frenchman's cheeks and there was a look of infinite gratitude in his eyes when the doctor gently lowered him to the pillow.

"I thought it beautiful and touching to see two big German soldiers sitting in the front room of a house in the town of Bétheniville, not many leagues from Reims, while a little French girl, perhaps twelve years old, gave them a lesson in French. It was they who seemed the children and she the adult, so awkward and simple and attentive were they and so monitor-like and strict with them was she.

"The French children who were begging pfennigs with pathetic, pretty histrionicism from the princes, generals, majors, captains and private soldiers who came and went through the railway square in the French town where great headquarters of the German armies are located seemed to me to afford decisive enough proof that these little ones were not much afraid of Mr. Kipling's 'Huns.' I noticed with pleasure that almost never did they meet with refusal.

"And again, I could not convince myself that much personal rancor was existing between German invaders and Belgian non-combatants when a German officer, whose auto-

mobile was already well filled, stopped the car on a country road to ask a Belgian doctor whether he could not give him a lift to his destination.

"And in desolated Dinant I both wondered and smiled when I saw Ober-Lieutenant Dr. Lehmann of Dresden busily helping the Belgian mistress of the inn to set the dinner table when a party of shivering officers and correspondents arrived unexpectedly one chill night in September. The eager officer was perhaps more of a bother than a help to the hostess but she took his activity in good part and there was much laughter and chaffing between them. He had made his quarters at the inn for many days, and every Belgian about the place seemed fond of him. A month later I was there again for a night and the first thing I did was to ask for the Ober-Lieutenant. 'Oh! he is departed! He is gone these many days!'

"It was at Dinant, too, that I twice studied the method by which the German army is daily providing six hundred destitute families of the town with bread, meat and coffee, charging them absolutely nothing, while families which can pay obtain food at cost. Meat is delivered to the local butchers, and German sergeants stand by in the shops to see that the people are not overcharged. In Brussels I heard an assistant to the Belgian burgomaster ask the German commandant of the city, Major Bayer, for 10,000 sacks (that is 2,220,000 pounds) of flour for the poor. I heard the official stamp come crashing down on the typewritten request which the official also submitted, and I saw the paper returned to the Belgian functionary with a smile of acquiescence.

"To go back to Dinant, I saw little human tokens like the words chalked in German on the door of a poor

Belgian house, 'Here lives a grandmother ninety-eight years old. Keep out!' and on the door of another Belgian house the words, also in German, 'Here is a new baby. Be quiet.'

"Within a stone's throw of the first of the forts which the Germans took in the fighting around Liège I saw in October the grave of a Belgian soldier. It was strewn with green boughs and above it was a wooden cross on which had been lettered in black paint, 'Here lies a Belgian soldier.' The humble, but as the times go, sufficient memorial was the work of German soldiers now guarding the ruin of a fort around which was some of the hardest fighting of the war."

That is the opinion of an American. I had crossed East Prussia on the heels of the Russian retreat. I had talked with the victims of the lust of the Tartar hordes. I had seen a path of blood and degeneracy that made the senses swim. The German soldiers had seen these things too. In pursuit of General Russky's army, the Germans had rushed through towns and villages of their Fatherland still smoking with the torch, still horrible with the lamentations of women. I wondered what this army would do when it should cross the Russian frontier, when it should pay back the land of the Czar in its own coin. I went with Eichorn's army across the frontier and watched them crush the Russians in the Augustowo forest. I saw them in the villages of Amt, Filipowa, Suwalki, Augustowo, and about ten hamlets whose names I have forgotten, and in each of these Russian habitations there was no blood of non-combatants, no burning of homes, no screaming women.

"You have wonderful discipline in your army," I said to Captain Tzschirner in von Hindenburg's staff.

"Why?" he asked surprised.

"Because after your soldiers saw the devastation of East Prussia, I marveled that you could keep them from retaliating in Russia."

"We are not murderers," he said with dignity, "we are soldiers. We do not harm non-combatants unless they harm us."

#### WHAT ABOUT BELGIUM?

With an officer of the General Staff, I stood in the square at Malines, where, until this war began, most Americans did not know there was a cathedral.

"The barbarians were here," said this Prussian, "they committed atrocities. Would you like to hear about some of them so as to print them in your American papers?"

And he took me down a side street. We stopped in front of a little house, the wall by the door pock-marked with bullets.

"Our soldiers under the orders of an officer," he said, as if he were discussing the weather, "put three men against the wall of that house and killed them. They only found three in the house; if there had been five, we'd have five there. Would you like the names of those men and the day of their execution? I shall try and get them for you. I shall get the names of as many executed Belgians as you wish," and his voice grew stern. "Whenever a civilian fires upon our troops he is going to be killed. Civilians who shoot are not soldiers but murderers: We kill them instantly, any army in the world does the same thing."

What could one say? Our soldiers did it in the Philippines, in Vera Cruz. Any military man the world over will tell you that they are glad the Germans did terrorize franc-tireur Belgium. I have yet to meet a United States Army officer who does not condone the military reprisals of the Germans in Belgium. Armies

know their business and generally do it in a very efficient way. The Cathedral of Rheims, the burned part of Louvain, the other burnings in Belgium, I found each and every one to be entirely justified upon military grounds. It was significant to me that Liège, Huy, Lille, Charleville, Vincennes, Antwerp, Brussels, to name but a few of the places I visited where civilians did not fire on the German troops, were not burned and the people's houses were not pock-

marked with the bullets of execution.

As I see the German of to-day, he is childish and honestly open, hating a lie, quick to anger, far more nervous than a Frenchman, a little apt to make too hasty judgments, a sincere lover of his home, his country and his God, and once you've got him for a friend—although it is difficult to make him a friend because in these days of war he has become suspicious—he will go the limit for you every time.

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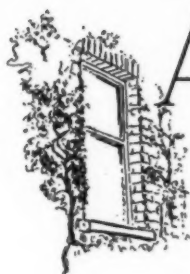
## PIPPA PAUSES

BY HELEN COALE CREW

**G**LAD Day, that scattered light  
Broadcast and the ecstasy-driven  
Lark on his upward paean-flight;  
That urged the dull, slow-footed snail  
Along a shining morning trail;  
Gave glistening birth  
To gemlike dew on the breast of earth;  
Brought out the plow, impelled the pen,  
And busied all the marts of men—  
Now art thou limping, lamed,  
Bruised, bleeding, shamed.  
Now in myriad graves unquiet, deep  
Thy toilers sleep . . .  
*God, are you there, in your heaven?*

Night, that did gently fall,  
Unclassed from the stars at even,  
Bearing a holy quiet in thy breast  
At Love's divine behest:  
A gracious pause for Life's sake given  
Weaver of tranquil dreams—  
Now art thou filled with terror and with gleams  
Lurid and hateful; the hope of the world is lying  
Trenched deep in thy gloom, unshriven!  
Womanhood is unfulfilled,  
Cradles ravished, life is stilled!  
Youth is dying! . . .

*O God! O God! are you there, in your heaven?*



# An Academic Question

by Alan Reid

ANY number of side streets from the Flatiron Building to Central Park have the same prosaic characteristics, but a Hilliard Carson doubtless has his existence in every one. Twenty years ago these store-and-apartment houses were brown-stone fronts of decent mien; now they pay satisfactory dividends to their owners—and occasionally to a romancer—while awaiting the northward tide of the businesses that require loft buildings. But this was a particular street, and here was a particular Hilliard Carson.

He was particular in more ways than one. Not as to his clothes, however, for though they were always quite whole and passably neat, they had an unmistakable air of being worn for utilitarian rather than decorative purposes. He was particular chiefly because he belongs to the incident—or series of incidents—about to be related.

Our Carson, then, stood in the exact center of the front room of his apartment, wearing, in addition to his other habiliments, a deep frown. His position did not need to be exact—in fact, he was unaware of it—but inasmuch as he happened to be precisely in the center of the floor, it may as well be stated. The frown is really important, for it denotes a state of mind, and that leads to the story.

Carson was a playwright, and he

was searching his brain for an elusive idea. He was standing here looking absently out of windows which overlooked not much of anything and told him less. Two acts of the play had been completed in rough draft, and the third was nearing its climax. Carson had suddenly gone stale. He was tired and his mind refused to work with its accustomed ease. His hero had made a progress through two acts of glorious deeds, and now, his name tarnished through the machinations of his rival in love, his life in jeopardy through the villainy of the same man, his creator could not find a way out of the mess.

Carson felt a bit cold from his lack of activity, and turned to poke the fire. A little gust rattled the window, and he glanced out. And then a white piece of paper fluttered nervously from out of nowhere and came to rest on the sill.

"An omen, by gad!"

He rushed over and threw up the sash. A chilly blast made him catch his breath, but he grasped at the paper, which teasingly jumped as though to elude him. Another convulsive grab and he had it.

"Come here, ye little devil," he said, half vindictively, as he closed the window. "Where'd you come from, anyhow?" He looked out into the street, but there was no one to be seen.

It was natural enough that, having



captured the paper, he should look at it. One side he found was covered with bold, well-spaced handwriting, yet of a feminine stamp. A cursory examination revealed no name, and in spite of a feeling that what was written there was none of his business, he began to read it, mentally justifying his curiosity with the sophistry that it might hold some clue to the owner's identity.

The afternoon was nearly spent and he found it an effort to read in the waning light. Turning a switch, he sat down with the paper in a chair beside the reading lamp.

"Now," he said, "we'll see what there is to this." Or if he didn't say it, he thought it.

A pale fragrance of violet assailed him as he began to read, and it occurred to the sub-conscious scoffer within him that here was a leaf from a scented manuscript. He pictured vaguely an angular authoress with a dourly sentimental countenance, but the visualization did not remain as he read through the page.

"By the Lord Harry!" he exclaimed aloud as he finished.

Not for a long time did Carson's enthusiasm again attain to the pitch engendered at this point. For here in the mysterious manuscript that had floated on a zephyr to his window he found his Great Idea. The situation portrayed in the page from the story by the unknown authoress fitted almost exactly into his play as a dramatic climax that would make it the big success of the year.

But with his cry of "Eureka!" (or words to that effect) came the realization that the incident had been wafted into his window and not into his brain; therefore, like the box of candy left on your seat by the train-boy, must be returned or paid for. The analogy wasn't perfect, either, for no writer with sufficient inventiveness to conceive the situation

would allow another to use it, even at a price. Clearly he must return it.

Carson was human in two ways, which, you will admit, is unusual in a playwright. He was ambitious and he was honest. Therefore he was tempted. He saw his opportunity and beheld a vision of what was likely to result from seizing it. The unworthy thought also occurred to him that the chances of discovery were infinitesimal, but he dismissed it at once. Even if he was admittedly inartistic in his methods, he was a gentleman.

With this comforting thought uppermost in his mind, he placed the paper on his desk and went to his club for dinner.

## II

ONE of Carson's good habits was to rise early—his alarm was set for six o'clock—and walk for an hour before breakfast. The fresh morning air was a good stimulant on which to begin his day's work, and a brisk walk on the avenue was better than any liquid bracer ever pushed across the mahogany. So although his night's rest had not been, strictly speaking, restful, he walked out of the front door on the morning after his adventure with the sheet of paper as the hands of his watch indicated six-thirty, and turned his steps toward Fifth Avenue.

Three houses from his own another front door opened, and a young woman stepped forth.

Carson turned to look. He paused for an instant, in fact, to gaze; and then, too late as he thought, he realized his impertinence. He might have spared the denunciation that he silently applied to his manners for all the notice he was given by the object of his interest, for she was apparently oblivious to the presence of any living thing. Carson had an un-

accountable feeling that he was just that—a living thing. He could not have told at that minute what the girl looked like, except that she was decidedly attractive, nor what she wore, except that it was very becoming. He was conscious of a wish to keep the vision with him, and fearing to dim its brightness by comparison with the people he might see on the avenue, he forsook his customary walk and went directly over the Jacquin's little restaurant where he was in the habit of breaking his bachelor fast.

Monsieur Jacquin opened the door, and gave him the hospitable "*Bon jour*" that had welcomed him regularly during the four years he had been in New York. Pedro, a green parrot that was domiciled in the window, greeted him with his accustomed "*Bon jour, Carrsohn—sacré!*" and received his usual quota of abuse from Monsieur for lack of respect for his guest.

"You are early this morning—hein?" he ventured, after Pedro had been properly subdued. The restaurant was empty, but Monsieur escorted Carson to the little table from which he always ate.

Politely appreciative, but preoccupied, Carson admitted that he was early. He was spared Monsieur Jacquin's further loquacity for the minute by the entrance of someone else who was bent on having an early breakfast. This individual was greeted with a welcome by Monsieur and by Pedro's exclamation, "*Quelle jolie fille—diable!*"

Knowing by experience that the parrot's estimate of womankind was not always reliable, and occupied by the arrival of his toast and marmalade, he forebore to investigate.

Monsieur Jacquin led the newly-arrived one to the table next that at which Carson was already eating, and seated her in a chair facing his.

Then he glanced up—and found himself looking into the blue eyes of the girl whom he had only a few minutes before seen leaving her house.

"One never knows what to expect of you writer people," he heard Monsieur saying genially. "You have never come to breakfast before till eight o'clock, and now it is not yet seven . . . *Eh bien*; Monsieur Carson here—*Mon Dieu*, I talk too much!" And he hastened away muttering that these people didn't know each other and the lady might be unwilling to meet the gentleman.

"The authoress!"

The thought suddenly came to Carson, and he as quickly dismissed it. Literary women were not of this type. As he drank his coffee he peered at her under lowered eyelashes. And Adam discovered that Eve had taken the same means of appraising him.

He put down his cup and smiled at her, frankly. She returned his smile with interest in the form of a merry little laugh. Pedro from his window home mimicked the laugh; unsuccessfully, thought Carson.

"Since we are writer people," he hazarded, "we must live up to the accepted conventions accorded to genius, and be unconventional. I have, as I understand it, been introduced to you, but you have not been introduced to me. Would you care to assume the prerogative of your acquaintance and tell me your name?"

"I am Barbara Dexter, but I am hardly a writer person in the sense that you are. I am only a reporter on the *Sphere*."

"How do you know who I am?" Carson asked.

"I read the papers—and the billboards."

Right here Carson had a sensation of futility. He was reminded

of his profession, his contract with Vroman to deliver a play by—good heavens; there were only four days left. He was reminded of the paper that came to his window.

"Yes," he admitted, "I am Carson, the so-to-speak playwright. Perhaps I am speaking to one of my critics; or do you represent one of that indefinite group known as the general public?"

"I am no critic," Miss Dexter replied, smiling as though a contretemps had been averted, "so if there are only two classifications, I must be one of the G. P. I have often been interested, by the way, in how a playwright gets his material."

"*Sacré!*" It was Pedro hurling anathema at a street gamin who had stopped outside the window. It gave Carson an opportunity to collect himself by looking toward the talkative bird and remarking that it was fortunate that the parrot swore only in French.

"Oh, it comes through various channels," he replied presently. "For instance, our meeting here might be made the basis of a comedy. I say—" he broke off—"here's a hypothetical case." He rose from his breakfast and sat down in the chair opposite hers at the other table. "Consider this as a purely academic question.

"It is this, Miss Dexter; suppose you were a creative artist, more or less, with a work of art to deliver in a few days' time. Suppose you had nearly completed your work when suddenly you lost the inspiration to carry you over a crucial point. And then suppose one day a fairy——"

"I thought this was to be academic," Miss Dexter interrupted.

"Fairies are often quite academic," Carson rejoined. "Suppose," he continued, "one day a fairy came to your window carrying a sheet of

paper under her arm, and rapped to get in. And you let her in, and she handed you the sheet of paper and vanished."

Carson paused, and the girl shuddered mockingly.

"I'd be terribly afraid it was a summons," she said.

"And suppose," Carson went on, "you read the paper and found on it an idea that would just fit into your work so as to round it out to your satisfaction—well, what would you do?"

The girl pursed her lips and assumed a judicial expression. She was not quite as serious as Carson might have wished.

"Oh," she said, "I suppose if I were not clever enough to do my work without the fairy's help, I'd seize upon the idea and use it. But then—these hypothetical questions—" She shrugged her shoulders.

"They are rather footless," Carson admitted, chagrined at her answer.

Miss Dexter beckoned to the waiter and asked for her check.

"This afternoon," she said, "I am going away for a few weeks' vacation; that's why I came to my breakfast early this morning. Now I must get to work."

Carson rose to help her with her coat. He knew better than to offer to pay her check, but he was on the verge of asking if he might accompany her. Something in the girl's manner made him desist.

"A little sojourn at Asheville," she said archly, "seems quite a necessary part of my winter program."

"Are you really going to Asheville?" Carson asked.

"Yes; why?"

"Oh, I have some wealthy friends who generally go there at this time of year and play golf at Grove Manor as if their lives depended on it.

Perhaps you'll meet some of them."

"I am afraid not. I lead a very quiet life there at a friend's house. Please remember that I am only a reporter."

And bidding him good-bye, she left Carson to his thoughts and a cold pot of coffee.

### III

THE city room of the *Evening Sphere* was already active when Barbara Dexter stepped out of the elevator and made her way across the untidy floor toward her desk. Typewriters were making a din as of some gigantic knitting bee, and the city editor was wearing the conventional grouch, indicating a state of mind that was chronic when the day's affairs had begun. Barbara greeted him as she passed his desk.

"Good morning, Bill."

"Morning, Barb," he replied without looking up from his work.

Bill Dexter had told his half-brother's daughter when she had begged to be put on the staff of the *Sphere* that there would be no partiality shown even if she was his niece. She would have to stand on her own feet, and take his cussing the same as any other whippersnapper reporter who made fool mistakes.

"Didn't you ever make any fool mistakes, Bill?" she had asked him. And Dexter, who was used to somewhat servile respect from those who worked under him, was a little bit pleased at her spirit, and told her to be ready to begin the following Monday. After six months under this harmless tyrant she began to realize that she was being favored in every possible way. Her assignments were carefully chosen so as not to bring her in contact with objectionable people who figured in the day's news, and there was seldom any work that required her to go about

the city after dark. Barbara's independence resented this coddling, as she called it, but she had been determined to ask no favors and kept counsel with herself, saying that one day her opportunity would come and she would show grouchy Bill Dexter what she could do with a real story.

Before sitting down she took from her muff a few sheets of manuscript which she laid on the desk beside the typewriter.

"There will be a sheet missing from my copy," she mused, "but Hilliard Carson needs it more than I do, so I'll rewrite it from memory. When that sheet blew out of my window I had no idea that I should ever hear of it again. I'd like to give that hypothetical fairy a piece of my mind." She laughed at her soliloquy as she sat down to her typewriter. "The copy-reader," she thought, "will wonder why one sheet in the middle of my story is typed."

### IV

AT half-past five Carson dropped his pen and yawned. He had finished his play. All that remained now was the revision and typing of the script and its delivery to the manager who had produced his last season's success.

He allowed himself the luxury of reverie as he sat by his writing table, and his thoughts did not drift far from the person of Miss Barbara Dexter. Had he known that, where women are concerned, two and two do not necessarily make four—that, in fine, Miss Dexter's naïve advice regarding the adoption of ideas via fairy dispatch was not as ingenuous as it seemed, he might not have pursued the same line of thought. Had he suspected that she was certain of the paper's coming into his possession, and of the fact that he was the author of the play called "Green Plumes" and that he was sure to be

at work on a new one, he would probably have torn up the manuscript before him—or taken the next train for Asheville.

In dwelling on Miss Dexter's charm and good looks he had been blinded to the possibility of her having written so dramatic a scene as that he had appropriated. Authoresses who wrote that kind of stuff bore the unattractive ear marks of the literary life. The thought of his breach of ethical procedure had rankled all that day as he worked out the third and fourth acts of his play, and now as he reviewed the situation in the light of what Miss Dexter had advised, he began to wonder if even a lack of cleverness were an extenuation of piracy. Then the door-bell rang, and Carson answered it to find the hall man with the evening paper.

The *Sphere* looked more than ordinarily interesting as he unfolded it. It was cool from the outdoors, and crisp, and exhaled a pleasing aroma of printer's ink. On the front page a rather prominent place was given to the celebrated Jameson case, but Carson, whose curiosity as to life in the large did not extend to the sordid details of murder trials, turned over to the theatrical news. He found that Karl Vroman had announced that he was going to produce Hilliard Carson's new play, "as yet unnamed," in the spring, but the item failed to rouse in him any considerable degree of enthusiasm. Then his eye caught a headline that attracted him:

#### JAMESON NEARLY A MURDERER HIMSELF—

and he began to read.

Here was a heart story by some reporter who had dug up the details of the dead man's past life and worked them into a special article, classed by the irreverent as "sob

stuff." But this was better handled, more dramatic than most of the material of its class.

It began with Jameson's boyhood. When he left home to go to the city, his mother gave him a Bible with her picture in it, believing that it would be a talisman of a holy sort. Jameson's career in New York had been wild and riotous, but the escapades of the ne'er-do-well did not prevent him from amassing—gradually first, and then more quickly—a large amount of money. He built a fine house and kept many servants, though he lived little at home. Then Jameson fell in love. The young woman to whom he addressed his attentions was already engaged to one Smiley, his lawyer.

When Jameson, the story ran, found this out, his rage was that of a madman. Ostensibly for the purpose of consulting him on a matter of business, he sent for Smiley to come to his house. The lawyer came without hesitation and was shown into the library by a servant. While waiting for Jameson to appear he looked casually over the bookshelves, and picking out a small Bible that attracted his attention, he glanced at it just as Jameson entered. Smiley placed the book on the table and advanced to greet him; whereupon Jameson said that he would not shake the hand of a thief, and confounded Smiley by accusing him of misusing the money that had been entrusted to his care.

Astonished denials only increased Jameson's anger; and drawing from his pocket an automatic pistol, the enraged man leveled it at Smiley's head.

The lawyer, fearing death at the hands of an insane man, protested his innocence, and, weak and trembling, placed his hand on the table to steady himself. His hand came in contact with the Bible he had laid



there only a few moments before.

"I swear it, Jameson; on this!" and he lifted the book.

Something dropped from between the leaves, and Jameson, seeing his mother's picture, sank to his knees with a groan, the pistol clattering across the hardwood floor . . .

There was more of it, and though Carson did not need to read further, he finished the article as something in the nature of a penance. He even considered having the newspaper made into an under-garment that would fulfil the mission of a hair shirt.

Nobody in the world but Barbara Dexter could have written that story; and she had made a fool of him after she was certain that he had found her sheet of manuscript. How she must have enjoyed the situation! Carson gritted his teeth. He had placed too much faith in his ability to recognize the genius author-ess.

Well, he had done all the harm possible, which was to make a complete ass of himself before the most charming girl he had ever met; so, with the realization that the elements of a fact story were legitimate material for the writer of fiction, or drama, he found approximate consolation in the knowledge that Vroman, at least, would approve the result. "The Upper Hand" ought to be a success.

## V

IT was late in January before the cast was selected, and the first week in February when rehearsals were finally begun. These were busy days for Carson, and he spent long hours in consultation with Vroman and his stage director.

"That's a strong scene at the end of the third act," said Vroman one day.

"Yes," Carson answered, "I sold

my soul to the devil for that idea."

Soon after this admission there came a letter for him, post-marked Asheville. The address was in Jack Medill's handwriting, which was almost a cause for alarm. Jack seldom wrote to anybody except in case of dire necessity. Carson tore open the letter and read it.

Dear Hill,

What is the matter with you, anyway? If I had a friend as beautiful and witty and altogether attractive as Miss Barbara Dexter, I wouldn't stick around New York while she stuck around Asheville. You never used to be like this.

Last night there was a dance at Grove Manor. Big push and all that. I had been playing golf all day and was so tired at night I couldn't drag one hoof after another. I had a shower and rub-down when I came in from the links, got into a flannel suit, and planned to spend a quiet evening with my pipe on the veranda. But just as I finished dinner, Hill, I heard a sound as of many voices, and behold, there *she* was, talking to little Mrs. Snaith and one or two others. Zowie! I just ducked upstairs and into my evening duds in about the time you would smoke a pipe without getting down to the gurgle.

And say, Hill, Miss Dexter can dance. She doesn't merely keep time to the music—it's real honest-to-goodness poetry of motion—but then, you wouldn't understand. I don't know how your name happened to be mentioned, but it was, and she said she thought you were rather good-looking and very clever.

Now if you don't allow as how I am a gentleman and a scholar to put you wise to this, then you are neither. If I supposed you could get away from New York, I never would tell you.

'S ever,

JACK.

Carson dropped the letter, reached for the telephone, and reserved a Pullman berth. Then he went to his bedroom and packed his little leather-bound trunk and a handbag.

He was in such a happy frame of mind that night as he prepared to turn into his berth that not even the fact that he had to take an upper, nor that he had forgotten to bring pajamas and tooth-brush, dampened his spirits in the least. He dwelt in the future, and the future was repre-

sented wholly in his mind by the following day when he should meet Barbara Dexter. The matter of the play rested lightly on his conscience; the rehearsals were going well, and as for his plagiarism, well, that could be easily smoothed out.

The longest part of the journey was from breakfast the next morning until the train, weary from mountain climbing, puffed into Asheville. A negro porter was ready to take his bag and pilot him to the hotel 'bus. Carson followed him to the big, lumbering automobile, looking about him as if half expecting to find Miss Dexter waiting at the station to meet him. A New Yorker by adoption, he was a staunch believer in coincidences.

The coincidence came later. As the 'bus toiled up the hill overlooking the golf links Carson looked down and beheld Barbara in the act of making a tee. In response to his demand to be let down, the chauffeur stopped the vehicle for him to alight. Then, as it continued its way, he paused to watch the girl's drive. What a picture she made! Her bright green sweater contrasted sharply with the white skirt she wore, and her dark hair, uncovered and slightly wind-tossed, seemed to glisten in the sunlight. She poised for a moment—like a Greek goddess, Carson thought—and as she swung her club for the drive, he had such a thrill as he would have traveled farther than Asheville to experience.

"Bravo!" he shouted, and he ran down hill to where she stood.

"Mr. Carson!" she exclaimed, as she held out her hand; "where did you come from?"

"Oh, look who's here!" Jack Medill came over from the green where he had just holed out. "Put it there, old man; I'm glad you are as enterprising as I had hoped you would be."

"Well," said Carson, as the would-be matchmaking Medill made a passable drive and they followed the balls, "I have been working pretty hard and I thought that I needed a rest, so, knowing that I had a friend or two in Asheville, I naturally came here."

Medill snickered. Previous to this he had been unsuccessful in trying to get Carson to come, but Carson hoped he wouldn't mention this just now. His advent had been auspicious, and he felt a keen desire to dwell in the present. He depended on Medill's being discreet.

They were approaching the eighteenth hole, with the advantage slightly in Barbara's favor. Knowing Medill's prowess, Carson, with quickening pulses, watched Barbara's every move and gloated inwardly at her splendid strokes. When with a well-placed shot with the loftier she lifted her ball to the green within easy putting distance of the hole, he forgot that he was a dignified New York playwright, and cheered.

"Shows considerable Dexterity, what!" observed Medill, after failing to land on the green.

"Just for that," Barbara said, "I'll hole out"; which she did, to Carson's great satisfaction.

Medill had letters to write, so he left them together on the club porch, and went back to the hotel.

"He's very faithful to his lady-love," said Barbara after he had departed. "It's a wonder that a man so very much engaged should be willing to play golf with another girl."

"Is Jack engaged? I didn't know it."

"He told me this morning. Evidently it is recent, for he seems quite excited about it."

It was on the tip of Carson's tongue to reply. "Fancy being excited

about being engaged to any one except Miss Barbara Dexter!" but instead he said:

"I don't wonder."

"How long do you expect to be here, Mr. Carson?" she asked.

"Oh, just a few days. You remember I have a new play being produced a week from to-night. I must get back for final rehearsals two or three days before then. The play"—and he looked at her keenly—"ought to be a success."

"Surely it will," she replied without any trace of discomfiture; "your plays always are."

"May I ask where you are staying?" he said irrelevantly, trying not to look pleased at her expressed belief in his art.

"You may," she answered; and she pointed toward the big hotel.

"But I thought that you were at the home of a friend."

"How well you remember," Barbara laughed. "I was just about to say that my friend's house is on the hill behind the hotel. And here," she added, as a trap, driven by a smartly-dressed young woman, came down the road to the porch, "is my friend coming to take me home."

Two minutes after he had been presented to Barbara's friend he could not remember her name. What was uppermost in his mind was the fact that he had been asked to call some afternoon during his visit in Asheville, and he found himself planning to test the invitation that afternoon.

## VI

LUNCHEON was a solitary meal for Carson. Medill did not appear, and there was no one in the great dining-room he could remember having seen before. He wondered if the place would seem any smaller if Barbara Dexter were there, and decided that it would.

Having at length finished his desert and shocked the dusky servitor by not waiting for a finger-bowl, he set out to find the house wherein dwelt the subject of his thoughts. A short walk along the road that wound up the mountain brought him into a dense wood where there was nothing except the road itself to remind him of civilization. The novelty of the outdoors appealed to his New York apartment - nourished imagination, and he threw his shoulders backward and drew in long breaths of the woodsy air. He walked on, and presently his exhilaration found vent in song:

"Bid me to live, and I will live  
Thy protestant to be;  
Or bid me love, and I will give  
A loving heart to thee."

He stopped. The house might be within hearing distance.

Just ahead there was a slight clearing, and the road turned at the base of a great boulder. Carson skirted the rock half expecting to find a house on the other side, but as he passed the turn there was no sign of an habitation. Undaunted by the manner in which the road stretched out and upward, he proceeded on his way, and presently he again burst into song:

"Bid me to love, and——"

From somewhere behind him came a silvery laugh. He wheeled about quickly and looked down the road, but he could see no one. Another laugh prompted him to look upward, and there on top of the big rock he saw Barbara Dexter beckoning to him.

"Come on up," she called; "there's a fine view from here."

"Likewise from here," retorted Carson, noting the silhouette she made against the sky; but nevertheless he found his way around the

base of the rock and discovered an easy approach to the top.

"The knight scales the castle wall to his lady's window," he observed as he reached her side; "and notices, incidentally, that from her casement a passing fair sweep of country is to be seen."

"Sit down, Sir Knight," she commanded. "I have something to tell you—in fact, a confession to make."

"A confession? To me?" Carson repeated in wonderment.

"Yes, but don't interrupt me or I may lose my nerve," she replied. "First, I've insulted you!"

Carson started to protest, but she held up a warning finger.

"And second, I have got you into a mess that I don't know how to straighten out."

Carson laughed.

"The first," he said, "isn't possible; and the second, though hardly probable, promises something in the nature of an adventure, for which thanks be!"

Barbara sighed half whimsically, and continued:

"You remember our meeting in Jacquin's that morning——"

"Of course."

"—when you asked me the academic question involving a fairy and a sheet of writing paper, and I said that if a writer wasn't clever enough to think up his own ideas he was justified in taking the fairy's?"

"Yes, but——"

"Well, that was the insult—the girl was blushing—for I knew that the page of my Jameson story that blew out of my window had landed on your sill. That academic question was very transparent, in view of my loss, and I was very rude to take advantage of the situation."

Carson could not restrain his laughter at her serious explanation.

"Why, bless your heart, that wasn't any insult—it was a well-merited re-

buke by the one most fitted to give it. When I read your story in the *Sphere* that evening I realized that I had as much as made a confession to you of my guilt; but I didn't feel culpable in letting Vroman have the play after I found that the incident I used was fact. I only wish, though, that my play were as well written as your story."

"But there's worse to come," the girl protested, ignoring his compliment; "I was foolish enough to tell Uncle Bill about it—he's the city editor of the paper—and it was on a day when he was specially grouchy. He's a dear old bear, though, and you mustn't agree with me if I say he's mean . . . He said he'd fix you. And he's going to wait until the day after your play is produced and then print an article about the whole affair."

"Never!" exclaimed Carson. "Not that I should care for myself," he added, "but it would never do for you to be even an unwilling party to such a scheme. You will make a name for yourself by your writing, without any sensational newspaper aid like this."

"That's what I told him," she agreed. "'Finders keepers,' and here's a case of the loser being able to laugh. But Bill Dexter's notions of chivalry are primitive, even if they are exercised in behalf of his niece."

Carson was silent for a minute. He picked a piece of stone from the top of the rock, toyed with it, and cast it away. He turned to Barbara.

"I can sympathize heartily with your uncle's championship," he said. "I hope you will always have someone to fight your battles. So when I say that I will go into the lists against Bill Dexter, please take notice that you have two knights jousting in behalf of the same lady."

"What can you do?" asked Barbara hopefully.

"Prevent him from publishing your name in connection with my perfidy. Don't ask me how. I have a plan that cannot fail. It needs only your silent co-operation—and your trust."

She held out her hand, and as Carson took it he inwardly blessed Jack Medill for writing to him and, incidentally, for being engaged to another girl.

"Will you share my box with me the first night of the play?" he asked as he helped her down from the boulder.

"Indeed I will," she replied quickly.

Then they walked up the road to the next turn where there was a bungalow—and people and tea.

## VII

AS the curtain rose on the third act of Carson's play, the author looked at his companion who, in turn, gave her whole attention to the stage. Carson could see that she was intent on learning what use he had made of her story. He could not keep his eyes from her as she followed the action closely, and, when the situation became tense, her bosom rose and fell excitedly. She was more beautiful to-night than he could have previously believed. Her pink gown was a marvel of simplicity, and the only ornament she wore was a jeweled band of black velvet around her white throat. Carson almost forgot his play in contemplating Barbara Dexter.

Suddenly he was aware of a burst of applause in which the girl beside him was joining. The curtain descended and rose again, and the company of actors acknowledged the

plaudits. Then there were cries of "Author!" from the audience, and he heard Barbara saying:

"They want you to speak!"

Carson pulled himself together and went out of the box. A moment later he appeared on the stage and the clapping subsided. To Barbara he seemed a bit dazed, but she was proud that it had been given to her to furnish some of the inspiration that had brought this man success. As he began his speech of acknowledgment, she wondered for an instant how he could ever circumvent grouchy Bill Dexter.

"It is very gratifying," he said, "to know that you are enjoying the performance. Unfortunately, through a mistake, the name of my collaborator, Miss Barbara Dexter, was omitted from the program, but I am glad to have this opportunity of saying that whatever there may be good in the play is due mostly to her part in its writing."

He bowed himself off the stage and when he could get past the congratulations of the stage manager and the principals he found Barbara waiting for him just outside the box. She was trembling and her eyes were wet but she smiled as she gave him her hand.

"Hilliard!" she said softly, and her face spoke her admiration.

Out in the theater the lights were dimmed for the last act. He drew her behind the drapery and they were alone.

"Barbara," he whispered; "my collaborator—for life!"

Her head fell on his shoulder for a moment. Then she looked him full in the face and answered with her eyes.





# A Wardrobe *in* Jeopardy

Eugene P. Lyle Jr.

Author of "The Spadassin" etc.

AUNT RELL and Madge got out of Germany with a suitcase and handbag each. Their steamer trunk, bought appropriately for the long anticipated summer abroad, they had to leave behind in the hotel at Frankfort. With the rush of American tourists for the first train that the Kaiser could spare from mobilization, luggage was *impedimenta* really. You either left it behind, or you missed the train. As Aunt Rell said:

"I'd hate to try and name anybody anywhere, Madge, who isn't going to get hurt by this war, but that's no reason why it should lose you your job back in Glorietta."

Madge had substituted one year, but this year the Glorietta School-board had given her the second grade and she just had to get back before school opened. Aunt Rell would take no chances on delay, which explains why she ever consented to move on without even their washing. The washing had been accumulating all the way up from Lucerne, and at Frankfort they had given it out to a waddling, bovine soul vouched for by the hotel. War broke loose before she brought the clothes back, and she still had not brought them back when the chance came for flight. So the washing was left behind.

Their hotel, the Reishof, was close to the big central railway station; and that was lucky, for they had not

a mark left for a cab; only their letter of credit, their circular ticket back to London, and the consular certificate of nationality which would probably insure their not being taken for belligerents or spies. A bitter tang was in the air that had been so genial. It cut distinctions, sharp and savage. You were a friend or you were a foe; and concerning foes, the Empire had gone into the business of their destruction. As for the benefit of a doubt, there was no such thing.

"Oh, we'll never get a seat!" cried Aunt Rell while yet half a block from the station. "Would you look at 'em, Madge!"

Streams of folk, at that distance with something of a holiday flurry, were being swallowed under the great inverted bowl of the structure's roof; and a band somewhere was playing a march.

"Don't worry," Madge told her, changing hands to the suitcase, "they're not Americans. They're not taking our train."

It looked like a German holiday-going-away for the day; that is, at first, until one came close and saw the look on the faces of the women. The women were not going, nor the children; only the men, unless a man were old or crippled.

"Don't you see?" said Madge. "They're more reservists—always

more of them—going to the war.”

So it was. The women so clung to the ranks that one did not at first perceive the marching column—a thin, gray stream through the eddying of women’s hats and shawls. Within the station the column still moved on, more slowly, the eddying with it, and on through a wide gate to the train sheds; but at the gate the eddying flooded back, and the column moved alone to the waiting trains.

In the station Aunt Rell recognized her recreant wash-woman. The bovine soul waddled, panting, along with the column, one parboiled hand on a gray-green shoulder. At the gate she raised both arms and tightened them round the man’s neck. A weak, stupid face bent to hers, and she kissed it. She pressed her hand on his shoulder, as if in spirit she would keep it there beyond the gate; but when he half edged out of the column as if he would shrivel into her arms, she patted him brusquely and herself pushed him on through the gate. Her nostrils were twitching as she turned from the grilled barrier, and her eyes were dazed. But she did not snifle.

“So that’s it,” declared Aunt Rell, believing herself indignant. “Knitting socks for that boy, I’ll wager, ’stead of doing my washing.” Aunt Rell put it this way, so that she, too, might not snifle.

“Never mind,” said Madge. “That’s our gate yonder. See those Americans trying to get through.”

Beyond any doubt they were Americans. Their consular certificates to convince the guard at the gate seemed ridiculously unnecessary. So also were the little American flags pinned to some of them. The little flags plainly said: “Oh, yes, we are very neutral. This is one fight we are not in.” Aunt Rell’s flag as

plainly added: “Still, it might be as well not to get us started!”

The flag was pinned to her rain-coat, which she wore because her arms were full of suitcase, handbag and umbrella. Lest her hat be knocked awry in the jostling, she had tied it on with an automobile veil, knotted under her chin. She was dressed for storm, and the summer morning was bright, so that the resolute triangle of face tucked between hat and veil trickled with perspiration.

“Walk, Madge, walk, or I’ll be stepping on your heel.”

Her niece, in shimmery things for the contrast of youth, turned a face touched by acute distress.

“Aunt Rell, *please* keep close behind, I’ve a presentiment and—and someone will see!”

“See what?” demanded her aunt. “See what?”

“S’sh!” the girl implored desperately.

But by then they came to the crush at the gate, and when they were passed through under stern Teuton eyes, they scurried for the train like pullets on rumor of a worm. At the steps Madge turned.

“Keep close behind me,” she hissed, “you know, when I step up.”

Aunt Rell blankly obeyed, and they crowded single file along the narrow corridor of the car, and found at last a compartment with two vacant places.

Madge dropped into the place next the window, and crossed her ankles tightly, the right heel pressed against the instep of the left.

“Now what—” began Aunt Rell, dropping exhausted beside her, after hoisting their suitcases into the rack overhead.

“Oh, wait,” cried Madge, under her breath, looking to see what manner of traveling companions they had fallen among.

This had become instinct. You never could tell what queer adventure, grotesque or ghastly, awaited you in a Continental railway compartment. But Madge's swift glance was reassuring. Four of the seats were occupied by two army overcoats, and two swords with scabbards and belts. The two army officers who thus reserved four seats on a crowded train were occupying space elsewhere. There were, then, only two persons besides themselves in the compartment, evidently two sisters as they were dressed alike in cheap mourning. Their black dresses had unmistakably come out of a box on a shelf. The store wrinkles were in them yet. The two creatures occupied the two seats opposite; and behind their veils they sat in stolid lethargy as if they had boarded the train at some station during the night and were by now comatose. They were not Americans, that was certain. They were some sluggish species of foreigner. But for the moment, Madge was concerned only in their not being men. She had her premonition to verify.

With half a wary eye on the compartment doorway, past which tourists were frantically squeezing in the quest for seats, she bent over her knees, slightly lifted her skirt, parted her ankles, and took one look.

She leaned back. "Yes—ripped!" she announced.

Aunt Rell grunted sympathy. "Comes of our not getting back that washing, or you could have had another pair."

"Or if our letter of credit had been good for a darning needle! I knew sewing it wouldn't hold."

"Well, it's a mighty annoying war all around," Aunt Rell conceded. "But anyhow, here's the list and when the war's over that woman is going to account for every piece."

She drew the list from the outside

flap of her handbag and began reminiscently going over it. Every Monday morning for years she had made out such a list, and no washerwoman in Glorietta had ever yet successfully robbed Aunt Rell of a garment. She used the printed blank lists of the Glorietta Steam Laundry, which saved her writing out the names of the articles, and whenever she used up a pad of the blanks, Mr. Aunt Rell had to step in at the Glorietta Steam and beg a fresh one. To Europe she had brought a pad, and to Europe had transferred the ceremony of auditing the wash. For anybody's war to presume to cut into the ceremony—Aunt Rell implacably tucked the list back into her handbag.

"The first American consul we get hold of in England will have to 'tend to it. Now, when do you suppose this train means to start?"

The train had started, but had stopped again, to let troop trains go by. It was always stopping, to let troop trains go by. The windows of the tourists' train were closed, and a soldier with gun and bayonet marched up and down the corridor to see that they stayed closed, because some spy for some unaccountable reason might drop a bomb out and blow up something; but it was permitted to look through the closed windows, and also one could hear.

"What are they everlastingly singing for?" Aunt Rell wanted to know.

The singing came from the troop cars, over the rumble of wheels, deep and thunderous and heavily exultant, the measured thud of iron-shod giants, the rhythmic growl of sullen, eager hate. It got on Aunt Rell's nerves. Even the dull, dense creature opposite—the one next the window—mechanically lifted and dropped her finger tips to the sill as each soldier-packed car pounded the rails of the crossing ahead, and her

lips moved in unison with her tapping.

"Seems like I *ought* to remember that tune," said Aunt Rell, frowning. She was that way about tunes; she fretted until she identified them, or thought she had. "Oh, what is the thing, anyway?"

Madge knew better than to tell her. It was a personal matter between Aunt Rell and her memory, so she frowned and fidgeted while the huge reverberations of the Germanic battle song rolled on and on.

"Oh, of course," she burst forth, greatly provoked with herself. "It's—'Kaiser, we who are about to die salute thee.'"

"Ssh!" whispered Madge. "They wouldn't address the Kaiser as 'thee.'"

"Why not? They address the Almighty that way, don't they?"

"Maybe so," said Madge, "but not the Kaiser. It's too familiar."

"All right, but you're always so scared, Madge, that I'm going to say something over here. Even if those two women knew English, they couldn't hear it. Look at them jabbering away on their fingers. It must be awful to be foreign, and deaf and dumb too. How *do* they understand what they're saying?"

"Perhaps they don't, always," said Madge. "That one next the window is having trouble to make the other understand something now. It's—it's painful, even to watch."

Their train was in motion again and the thunderous billows of song had rolled on below the western horizon. The two black-garbed women had roused to something like human animation; of the fingers, if not probably of the intellect. But the contortionate twisting, symbolic of some outlandish speech, had broken down. One dense intelligence—the one next the window—was trying to inject some intricacy of human

communication into the other dense intelligence. Ten desperate fingers worked off a flash of silent chatter, waited, tried again, failed again; and both women emitted baffled noises like monkeys in distress.

"Painful?" said Aunt Rell. "It's creepy. Good thing there's a sentry in the corridor. We can always holler. They're lunatics, I'm sure they are, and they're getting violent."

The sentry passed the open door, glanced in, and went on, Madge's restraining hand on her aunt's wrist.

"They'll be all right now," she said. "One of them has a pencil, and she will write it down. I think we'll be as much relieved as they are."

But both deaf mutes searched in vain for a scrap of paper, when the one next the window spied the white edge of Aunt Rell's laundry list and plucked it from the outside pocket of Aunt Rell's handbag.

"Of all things," gasped Aunt Rell.

Madge pressed her aunt into her seat. "She'll give it back, she only wants to write on it."

With her stub of pencil, the woman was jabbing words on the back of the list, which she held up close to the veil of the other woman for her to see.

The other woman nodded. She understood at last; the strain was over. But when Aunt Rell advanced her hand for the laundry list, the woman turned it over to the printed side, and grew interested, then absorbed. Aunt Rell and Madge stared. Even if the woman read English, what thrilling fascination could there be in another woman's washing? It was grotesque—grotesque and irritating. The mesh of human encounters, binding all mankind and all generations of mankind in its weave, has many strange links; but this one was becoming uncomfortably queer.

The woman showed the list to the other woman again, this time the printed side, and their fingers chattered excited comments about it, which ended with an incisive nod of the head by the second woman. Then both women lapsed back into the original stupid lethargy, except that after a period of vacuous thinking and gazing unseeing out of the window, the first woman would glance towards the corridor and make a mark on the printed side of the list with her stub pencil.

"She—she's changing," exclaimed Aunt Rell, "the prices, the Glorietta Steam Laundry's prices! There, she's marked up the price for shirts, and now—say Madge, I'm—I'm getting jumpy. What—what difference can it make to the creature what they charge in Glorietta to do shirts and corset covers? I want my list back, lunatic or no lunatic."

But the car bumped the car ahead, and bumped present belligerency out of her.

"Hear the singing? It's another stop. Such railroading! In the United States we'd have gotten to Holland long ago."

Yet the two abnormal women opposite sat in abysmal somnolence, no matter how many passing transports blocked the way. The only sign of life that either one showed, made it even worse. This was the measured, noiseless tapping on the window sill and the movement of lips in unison—a vacuous sort of devil's tattoo that soon had Aunt Rell near to writhing.

Abruptly she sat bolt upright. "Deaf people don't beat time to music!"

"Perhaps she isn't," said Madge. "You'd see she isn't, if you had any ear for music. Perhaps she's beating time to her thoughts."

"Thoughts?" scoffed Aunt Rell.

"Well, maybe not," Madge ac-

knowledged, "but there's an ink stain on her finger, so she's not exactly a clod of a peasant. Perhaps she's just drowsily beating time to something she sees—something moving—"

"Moving? What's moving in this country besides freight cars loaded with bellowing soldiers? Look at her! Now she's changing more prices." Aunt Rell put out a determined hand for the laundry list.

The woman looked at the hand, looked at Aunt Rell's resolute face, looked dully at the list. But she made a dogged gesture which said: "Wait." She hastily made a scratch or two more on the list, rolled it into a kind of spill, and concluded the pantomime with the queerest act yet. She leaned over, lifted Madge's skirt, and into the hole in the heel of the girl's stocking she tried to push the spill.

Madge furiously slapped away the hand and Aunt Rell snatched away the spill, which she unrolled and folded into her consular certificate, this time locking both precious documents in the interior of her handbag. The strange woman seemed disposed to protest, as if to her groping intelligence a stocking was safer than a handbag for one's laundry list. Moreover, the sentry was at the other end of the car.

"Quick," said Madge. "Humor her. Give her a blank sheet."

"The whole pad, if she wants it," said Aunt Rell, opening the handbag again, tearing off a sheet from the pad, and thrusting it on the woman.

The woman took the blank sheet, mumbling discontent; and then still another bizarre thing happened. The two German officers who had reserved the rest of the places in the compartment made their appearance, though they did not at once enter. Seeing that nobody had presumed to disturb their coats and



swords, they turned their backs and stood in the corridor and went on with their talking. While they stood there, the woman tore the blank list between her fingers into halves. One half she crushed into her mouth, and the other half she gave the other woman, who soberly crushed the second half of the list into her mouth; and as if it were a divided pretzel each chewed a while and gulped down the resultant wad.

"I'm going to get out of here," declared Aunt Rell, rising and stumbling. "Drat the creature, what enormous feet she has!"

Instantly one of the officers swung round, suspicion and quickening ferocity in his eyes. The alert gleam, as he bent his scowl on the four travelers in the compartment, showed that he had heard and understood. Despite herself Aunt Rell recoiled, though for the life of her she could not imagine where was the harm in a comment on the size of another woman's feet. Madge clutched her aunt's arm. Something dreadful was about to happen. The stale air of the compartment was electric with it. By contrast the two dense, sluggish women sat unnoticed, as sodden as if human intellect in them were the dry rot of an old stump. The officer's scowl had turned on them, and was fixed on them, but they might have been stumps really.

The other officer shouldered himself into the apartment, impatient, inquiring. The first uttered a half dozen staccato gutturals, with a downward jerk of the chin toward the two veiled women. The other grunted sharply and snatched out his automatic pistol. Both officers crowded roughly in front of Aunt Rell and Madge.

"Ouch!" cried Aunt Rell, getting a heavy heel on her toe. The officers' backs were turned. They were

bent over, and something violent was going on. Whatever it was, it was quickly over, for the officers straightened, jerking the two veiled women to their feet. Then Aunt Rell and Madge saw that they were not women. Veils, bonnets and coarse wigs had been torn away, and out of the cheap mourning dresses rose the heads of two men.

They were not prepossessing heads. They were small-eyed, heavy cheek-boned, thick-skulled heads. They were still lethargic, stolid. They looked a trifle more sullen than stupid, but that was all. If the two prisoners understood German, or if they could hear at all, it was not apparent, for the officers got no word from them. They were exasperatingly colorless, insignificant. Even to Aunt Rell and Madge they were far from being German. The different racial cast was unmistakable; it was queerer and more foreign than the two Glorietta, Iowa, ladies had yet encountered in their travels.

The officers half pushed, half flung their prisoners before them into the corridor, uttering a German word as they did so. This word was repeated angrily by the sentry, who came running, clapping hand to his gun like one who has the impulse to kill at sight of a snake. The word passed, and other Germans, crowding with tourists into the corridor, echoed it with a snarl.

"My sakes," breathed Aunt Rell, "where everything is *ver-verboten*—it must be a heinous crime to dress like a woman. They'll get years in prison, I can see that."

"Yes, yes," Madge agreed eagerly, "or in a lunatic asylum."

Madge did not want to understand the word being muttered with such hatred. Aunt Rell's theory was better.

"Good thing for us, I guess," murmured Aunt Rell, "that they had

sense enough to swallow that blank list. It keeps us out of it. They're searching them now. No, they're shoving 'em on out. I suppose there's a jail in this town."

"Yes, yes," said Madge, shuddering, "of course there's a jail."

They—the train-load of refugees—bedraggled and stiff and famished, came to the sea at last by way of Holland, and thence tossed for a night in dread of mines, and the morning after huddled down a railed gangplank onto British soil. British guards were at the foot of the chute and British officers culled from the herd anyone of German name, accent, or countenance. It was as well to show what one could show for identification, and Aunt Rell had her consular certificate like a loaded pistol all ready in her hand.

An officer with a jutting blond brow and a strap under his chin read the certificate and looked at Aunt Rell and Madge. The certificate was superfluous. Without ever having heard of Iowa, the officer knew by looking at them that that was where they were from. He smiled them a welcome touched with sympathy for their pathetically ludicrous look of lost waifs, and was handing back the certificate when he perceived another paper beneath, that had been folded with it.

"That's my laundry list and nothing to interest a man," declared Aunt Rell. "Give it to me."

The officer was frowning in some perplexity. "This writing on the back, it is not English."

"See here, young man," said Aunt Rell, "are you crazy too? Well, tell me then, what's so fetching about my washing statistics that nobody can let go without almost a fight? As for that scribbling on the back—and those prices changed on the front, another lunatic did it, and you

ought to make it out better than I can. Now will you hand it over?"

The Briton did nothing of the kind. He was in the beginning of mystification, and native tenacity did the rest. He drew them out of the pressure of the gangway, and in a quiet corner of the dock questioned them, at first almost idly, then searchingly, about their odd adventure with the laundry list.

"So you see for yourself they were daft," Aunt Rell concluded. "It was a blessing the German officers bundled them off the train."

"Then the train went on?" asked the British officer, very soberly.

"Yes, it stopped that time only long enough to put off those two nuisances."

"I congratulate you," said the officer, with a puzzling sincerity in his manner. "If the train had waited, you would have seen . . ." But he changed his mind about making himself clearer, and shook himself as if there was something that he did not want to see, either.

"You are going to London?" he assumed. "Yes, to be sure, that is the best place for you until a boat sails for America. Kindly give me the name of your hotel."

Aunt Rell wonderingly babbled the address of a boarding house in Woburn Place, where she and Madge had stopped earlier in the summer.

The officer wrote it down, thanked them, and absently made the routine gesture that indicated that they were definitely admitted on Britannic territory. "No, wait," he said, "the train is ready. I will go to London with you."

"That will be very nice," said Aunt Rell in weary sarcasm; "at least you're not disguised like a woman. My list, if you please."

The officer smiled and shook his head. He carefully placed the list in his pocketbook, which he buttoned

securely in his breast pocket. "I think I may venture to tell you, madam," he said, "that I will take your laundry list to the Russian Embassy in London. The lunatic's scribbling and also the altered prices of the—um, Glorietta Steam Laundry—may prove rather informative to the code secretary of His Excellency."

"His Excellency?"

"Meaning the Russian Ambassador."

"So, now it's the Russian Ambassador that wants my laundry list!"

"Indeed, dear lady," returned the officer, "The Czar himself—"

"The Czar himself," Aunt Rell stated, "can't have it, unless he gets back my washing in Frankfort that it calls for, so don't you go to rousing any false hopes in him. I trust you with it only because I have to and because maybe you'll get violent if you're not humored. Do you reckon they'll honor a letter of credit on that train for a mutton chop with French fried potatoes and a cup of coffee? This starving child and I have lived off of six buns all the way from Germany."

The officer made Aunt Rell and Madge his guests all the way to London and to the boarding-house in Woburn Place, where he left them, jumped into the taxi that had brought them from the station, and made off, with the laundry list still in his possession, and Aunt Rell calling after him unheeded.

The day was young yet, and Aunt Rell wasted none of it in repose. She kept to their room only long enough to moderate the ravages of travel, so far as that was possible from her suitcase, handbag and a British tin pitcher of hot water. Madge stayed behind with one foot bare and a darning needle and ball of silk borrowed from the landlady. Aunt Rell sallied forth with a six-

pence for 'bus fare, also borrowed from the landlady.

It was dusk when Aunt Rell got back, and dropped to the seat under the hat rack, and asked Madge: "What *are* we to do?"

She had found a mob of Americans ahead of her at the American Consulate. She had found another mob ahead of her at the American Embassy. And the banker who would have, or might have, paid them money on their letter of credit—that banker had put up nothing but his shutters.

"I don't know *what* we are to do," Madge replied.

"Has that red-beaked boarding-house woman said anything about turning us out?"

"Not—not yet."

"Well, she will, when I ask her for the next dime—I mean sixpence—to get downtown on."

"Oh, what *are* we to do?"

"Grin," said Aunt Rell grimly.

Outside a taxi swarmed to the curb. There was a brisk footstep, and Aunt Rell opened the door to their British officer.

"H'm, you!" said Aunt Rell. "Did you bring—"

"Your laundry list? oh no," said the young man, closing the door behind him.

His blond jutting brow was as sober as ever, but there was an elation in the very set of his soldierly shoulders that he could not conceal. He told them, speaking to Aunt Rell but with an eye hopeful of congratulation on Madge. It belied the reserve that is military and British both, but he was young and the thing had just happened to him, and besides Madge was pretty and especially appealing in her limp, forlorn summery togs. The thing was, that the War Office had lowered into his grasp a precious thing, his promotion. And why? Because to the

Allied arms he had added the strength of ten thousand, perhaps a hundred thousand men. And why that? Why, because of Aunt Rell's laundry list.

Madge's eyes were bright, though bewildered, and the young officer felt even better than at first.

"But my list," persisted Aunt Rell. "I've got to have it when I get my turn at the American Consul. I want to give it to him so that he, or more likely his wife, can check up on that washerwoman in Frankfurt when they attend to getting our washing back. Maybe you get ten thousand soldiers out of my list, but that doesn't get me back ten embroidered linen handkerchiefs I remember were on it. And, anyhow, young man, I'm tired humoring you. We're having a hard enough time trying to get what's our own, and if I can't cash a perfectly good letter of credit for a sixpenny—I mean, a sixpence—then at least—"

"That," said the young officer, "is why I came. I—that is, the War Office—thought perhaps you would like to—'cash'—your laundry list. I have brought a memorandum of each—um, garment—you had listed, as well," he continued, "as well as gold sufficient to replace the entire—trousseau—wardrobe—at any of our London shops." Whereupon, before their astounded gaze, he opened the door, gave a command, and a spry orderly emerged from the taxi with a black satchel. From the black satchel the orderly stacked on the hall table five stacks of ten sovereigns each, then withdrew.

Aunt Rell recovered ominously from the amazement. "Now young man, you listen here," said she. "I've been and humored you too much already, but if you think I'm going to humor you so far as to take money from you—"

"But it's for the list. We keep the list," he protested.

"Which shows how hopelessly daft you are," she cut in. "Giving a hatful of gold for a—"

"Then the War Office is crazy—"

"I believe you," said Aunt Rell heartily. "You've got to allow that Americans have good reason to think any of you are plain loony when the whole continent pitches in to cutting each other's throats."

"What I meant," urged the officer, "is that it is not my money. It is from the War Office. You are to sign a receipt."

"I'd much rather have my own washing back," said Aunt Rell dubiously.

"But," argued Madge, "this will buy twice as much, and a trunk to put it in."

"And," quickly added the officer, "if the Government can render any further service, such, for example, as taking care of the letter of credit you mentioned—"

"Law me," exclaimed Aunt Rell, "it's a blessing *something* is sane! But why should the Government—?"

"Listen," said the officer, with perfect candor, since the two ladies were, unknown to themselves, to be the wards of the War Office until aboard a westward bound Atlantic liner, "listen, and I will tell you what you have done. You have brought us the information as to the exact direction of the mass of the German mobilization in the west. We even know now something of the details, such as the number of transports, the number of cars—"

"Remember, Auntie," cried Madge, "the one next the window was tapping, tapping on the sill at every stop?"

The officer nodded. "They were Russians," he said; "railroad clerks. For ten years past they had drudged

at routine service in German freight yards. But when war broke out they were ready. Their chance to send out what they knew was small, but they managed it."

"Managed it?" echoed Aunt Rell. "We might have been shot as spies."

"Yes," agreed the officer, "as I say, almost any hazard might have intercepted the message on that laun-

dry list. But at any cost the price was cheap."

Madge and Aunt Rell exchanged looks of growing horror as the truth dawned upon them.

"Then," said Madge, "then, when those two Russians were jerked from the train, they—they—"

"Precisely," the young officer helped her out, "*that* being War."

## A MILLION FOR SARA

BY VIOLA BURHANS

JEROME EDWARDS had been a peppery youth, an obstinate old gentleman, and—in one respect at least—an unbudging imbecile. When he decided to leave Sara Stannard exactly one million dollars, it was not surprising, therefore, that the transfer of this money depended upon a remarkably strange condition.

Years before Sara's pink-fisted arrival, Edwards had loved her mother; but that lady had put an end to his hopes by marrying Peter Stannard, an impecunious artist to whom she had sat for her portrait.

Thereafter, Edwards loathed all artists. The painter in Peter was a bristling offense in the other's eyes; and he coddled this aversion with such red-pepper obstinacy that in later years he lost all sense of values and harbored the insane idea that Sara would probably make some worthy young man a bachelor for life just as her mother had done, and for the same reason.

Accordingly, when he drew up his will he made it legally plain that if Sara sat for her portrait, or if her head were used to advance the in-

terests of the "calendar trade," or found in any illustration or painting—in short, if she had anything whatever to do with artists—this fortune would be withheld from her, and given instead to a worthy "Muldoon's" in the Blue Mountains. And this stipulation was to remain in force for five years after Edwards's demise—a long enough time in all conscience for one so pretty as Sara. In fact, no young man who knew Miss Stannard ten minutes could imagine it taking her anything like five years to marry!

Sara was orphaned and not yet twenty, when at the death of Edwards she was advised by his attorneys of this will. The money was to be held in trust for her until her twenty-fifth birthday, and meantime certain tactful persons had been appointed whose sole duty it was to see that the terms of this will were complied with.

Naturally Sara resented this paid surveillance. She had no intention of letting a land-slide of dollars go to a Blue Mountain "Muldoon's" (whatever that might be!) When a girl wakes each morning to the rasp



of an alarm clock, dresses in a room dark enough to keep canned fruit from spoiling, and takes dictation during the day from a pinch-penny employer in a sun-shy office, she is pretty apt to be all-round efficient. So it entailed but little effort for Sara to become all eyes and ears for the safeguarding of that precious million.

Now, as every one knows, an artist is blessed with second sight when it comes to sizing up a model, although he is not always able to pay for the kind he desires—especially if she be in demand at the private studios. This may explain why so many impecunious, top-floor painters, with squares of cardboard under their arms, brazenly scour New York, stalking prey for dashing covers of periodicals.

It was through one of these street-prowlers—a rude name to apply to so nice a boy as Howard Wilbur, a boy who dreamed salon canvases but sold calendar heads—that Sara, when she had all but reached her twenty-fifth birthday, nearly lost her coveted million.

Through a blurring downpour of rain she had skidded across to the subway that night after her work, and dropped into the only remaining seat of the car she entered. Her feet were wet, and the brim of her perky plush hat was dripping water into her lap; but in spite of these discomforts her spirits were smiling, for, as usual, she was lost in a rose-dream of spending her million.

People with dripping umbrellas jolted against her. The car reeked with the smell of rain-wet clothing. But Sara was oblivious. Racing through her mind were visions of electric motors—brand-new beauties she had glimpsed through the windows of salesrooms—one of which, she told herself happily, was to be hers in exactly four months' time.

With a clacking roar the train dug steadily along on its way uptown while Sara continued to stare absently ahead of her, unblinkingly facing the brilliance of a light across the aisle as she tried to decide whether she would have the interior of her car upholstered in velvet or brocade. She was unaware that young Wilbur, clinging to a strap in front of her, was watching her intently.

Wilbur, of course, knew that he should have wrenched his eyes from the girl's face and done one of two things; either read the twelve-strike fiction on the advertisements or stared through the rain-splashed windows at the rushing, vacuous blackness outside. But he did neither. To take his eyes from what was, in his vernacular, "a peach of a girl," would have been, he adjudged, ungallant of even a blind man.

So he watched covertly—perfectly willing to die for his ill manners if that became necessary later. And as his grasp instinctively tightened on the square of drawing-board he carried under his arm, his mind leaped with a jerk to the Belnaird Exhibit Prize to be given in another three months. Five thousand dollars for a woman's "head." And this girl's face was beautiful like beryl, like some hovering dream that greeted him nightly just as he was lapsing to sleep.

Something like fire suddenly licked through his gaunt body. His fingers tingled for his pencil. A few quick strokes, a mystery of slender, plastic lines, a hint of subtle shadows—and there would be his masterpiece, his chance to be recognized among the painters of his time. He knew that he could easily hold in mind the coloring of a face like that! Dashes of red in the right places, with here and there a thumb-pressure of pink. Eyes, brows and lashes very dark. Hair—Wilbur drew in his breath.

What hair the girl had! Where it was wet, it was just the color of red veins in old rocks. He could picture the French rapture of his friend, the critic Chatrian—

Howard stopped short in his thoughts, for at the next station the seat directly across from Sara became empty and with a meteorlike movement the young man dropped into it, guardedly placing his drawing-board upright at an angle to his knees. So far as Sara's consciousness of him was concerned, however, he might have been a polar map or a fixed star. Engaged in the problem of choosing between gray velvet or pink-flowered brocade for her motor, it is little wonder that the effrontery of an unknown young artist failed to attract her attention.

When finally she did look in his direction (she had decided that brocade was more satisfying) as they were approaching a station, it seemed to Sara that her heart suddenly pumped a cold shower of blood to her very finger-tips. One glance at Howard's busily moving pencil was enough. It was plain that this impudent stranger was trying to rob her of a million dollars in broad daylight! As her dismayed, indignant eyes met Wilbur's, that young man suddenly concluded that the next station was his; and as the train came to a stop he rose, concealing the sketch under his arm, and hastily made his way among a throng of others to the platform.

In a panic, Sara followed him—or tried to. Down the subterranean sidewalk of the station she flew, and just as she made the turning for the stairs she shot into the arms of an old gentleman who wrathfully blocked her progress long enough to tell her what he thought of "young ladies who acted like tom-boys in public thoroughfares." When finally he let her pass and she dashed down

the stairs and up again into the street, the young man she was pursuing was nowhere in sight.

Sara looked wildly this way and that, futile savagery welling in her breast. The most impudent, heartless, thieving young man in New York was as lost to her vision as the milky way in a blizzard. Incoherently she questioned a policeman who approached, but he merely alleged flatly:

"I didn't see nobody beatin' it on this block."

After a time, Sara started to walk home in the rain, feeling as if she were dead. In five minutes she had lost a million. The greasily encased alarm clock would continue to rasp her awake mornings, and it made not the slightest difference now, so far as she was concerned, whether electric cars were upholstered in velvet or brocade. The young man, doubtless, would use her head for the cover of some periodical, and in that case her five years of vigilance had gone for nothing. Unless—the thought brought a flicker of hope—she advertised in the newspapers and by some good chance he saw her advertisement. This thought uppermost, she dashed breathlessly into the nearest stationer's shop and composed a "personal":

Will the man who sketched girl with black plush hat in subway yesterday, call at 199 West 104th Street any time after 5:30 Wednesday?

S. STANNARD.

At precisely the moment that Sara, bedraggled in clothes and spirits, let herself into her boarding-house, Howard Wilbur in his cheap top-floor room above a hair-dressing parlor, was relating his adventure of the afternoon to André Chatrian who—so those from the studios of Moreau averred—could tell a Daumier from a Corot in the darkest cellar of the Rue Mouffetard.

"It's the head *par excellence* for the Exhibit," Wilbur concluded excitedly, as the other calmly lighted his second thin cigar. "The prize is as good as in my hands. Such a subject!—the most wonderful, Tagus-treasured—"

Chatrian held up a slim hand.

"Put it on canvas, *mon ami*. I am an old man. You waste your colors. I would like to see you take this award, and I believe that it is not impossible if you get the right subject—"

"My subject is all right!" Howard broke in fervently, his eyes shining.

"I am glad," Chatrian replied, his eyes resting affectionately upon the young man. "You know that I stay in America to watch your work. I befriended you in Paris because I saw that you loved the colors. You have the good body and the young heart. Some day—but we will talk of that later. I have learned to-day that I am one of the three who will decide this competition, and I think I may say that if your canvas is good—*very good*—" he paused significantly, streaming a line of violet-colored smoke toward the ceiling.

"I know," Wilbur said, his fingers shaking as he spread his hasty sketch before Chatrian. "What do you think—" his dry voice choked him.

The other examined the drawing intently, his nearsighted eyes close to the cardboard.

"*Voilà!*" he exclaimed finally. "There is a new note in this. The woman has a face. She will pose for you?"

"No. I couldn't afford to ask her." Then, seeing what his friend was about to propose, he added hastily: "I really don't need her to pose for me. I—" he colored, a fact that was not lost upon Chatrian—"I could not forget her face if I were put off in the middle of the Bay of Callao for the next twenty years. I think it

may be best—for my work, you know—" he stopped and savagely twisted his mahlstick.

Chatrian regarded him steadily for a moment. Then:

"I think it may be much better," he said, looking about for his hat.

That night until late Wilbur used a plentiful amount of charcoal and paper in drawing Sara's head; and when finally he slept exhaustedly, his spirit took space in one stride and went unerringly to the farthest star, which turned out to be the girl's pink-pointed face.

The next morning while breakfasting on his sugar-crusted buns and pot of tea, he saw Sara's advertisement. And at once five-thirty that night seemed very far away—as far off as the star he had visited in his dreams.

"She wants me to know that she will pose for me," he said tremblingly—and that day patience had ample opportunity to have its perfect work in his soul.

However, his hour came at last, and as he rang the bell of the private house indicated in the advertisement and was ushered into the brussels-carpeted parlor by an appraising-eyed maid who informed him that Miss Stannard would be "down directly," he felt very much as if he were about to run upon violets in a vacant lot.

Sara did not keep him waiting. Almost immediately Howard heard her coming down the stairs—rushing, as if unaware of the silken symphony she was making—and at the first glance into her dark eyes, he forgot about his prize picture.

"It is very good of you to call, Mr. ———" she began a trifle excitedly.

"Wilbur," he supplied.

"I am Miss Stannard. I saw you sketching me yesterday in the subway, and when you got out at Ninety-

sixth Street I tried to overtake you but I lost track of you in the crowd."

"I am sorry," he interpolated. "I'm afraid I took an unpardonable liberty—" he left the sentence unfinished, for at that moment he remembered his picture.

"I am afraid you did," she agreed. "Why were you drawing me? I mean—" she flushed hotly—"I really have a very good reason for asking," she concluded.

He told her, setting before her rapidly and comprehensively the chance that had come to him, hoping desperately that she would understand. And as he talked, Sara saw with new vision. The big, thin, almost shabbily clothed young man, with his unshaped, unpolished shoes planted tensely in front of him, his straw hat weather-soiled, and his cuffs a trifle frayed, seemed gradually to go out of the room; and in his place she felt the winged presence of a live soul, encompassing her with its hope, streaming a radiance across her path. When he had finished she sat back staring at him silently.

"You see," he concluded with a lurching choke, "it means recognition for me—and five thousand dollars besides."

Then Sara found her voice:

"It means—exactly one million dollars to me," she said slowly. "If you finish and exhibit that picture, I shall lose a million dollars."

She saw him start. Incredulity, dismay, and a sort of savage denial sprang up in his face. She began to explain rapidly, and he listened in silence until she had concluded. Then he said bluntly in a quite lifeless tone:

"I believe you. How fortunate that I saw your advertisement." And he added as he rose to go: "I sincerely congratulate you upon your good fortune."

"Then you won't—" she approached him earnestly, her eyes suddenly wet with tears.

"My dear Miss Stannard, I should never forgive myself if I were the cause of your losing such an unearthly pile of money."

"I'll give you twice five thousand!" she amended impulsively. "Please! You must let me make good."

But he smilingly deprecated the offer as he left the room.

Wilbur did not find it an easy task on the morrow to make his position clear to Chatrian, especially since the young man instinctively knew that Miss Stannard would wish him to withhold the personal particulars of the strange situation. The argument that ensued was somewhat heated.

"So you will lose five thousand American dollars!" Chatrian hissed despairingly when Howard continued obdurate.

"It isn't the money—*now* that counts," the other said gloomily. "It's the girl. She is—she will be a millionaire. And I—" he twitched about impatiently—"I'm such a rotten poor artist that I can't even sell a picture to a tea and coffee store for a premium!"

Chatrian waved his stick.

"May the dead painters hear the man talk!" he implored in exasperation.

"And probably long before I do anything worth while," the boy concluded fiercely—then he checked himself suddenly. "I say, Chatrian," swinging around his easel, "the light's good now. I must get to work."

As his friend had foretold, Howard lost the Exhibit Prize. His work, however, received "honorable mention," and was hung above a heavy velvet cord in a well-lighted corner of the Belnaird Galleries.

And the gods gave the young man one other recompense. Sara went with him one afternoon to see the pictures, and afterward they rode uptown in a green stage to her Aunt Phyllis Gainsley's home where over "tea and things," the three became somewhat acquainted.

Aunt Phyllis had beautiful crimped gray hair, a lorgnette, and a really imposing line of erect-headed forbears. But she had no money, and this had grieved her heart for three decades. Her niece's coming benefaction she now regarded chiefly as a timely Providence in her behalf, and over the mere mention of Sara's million she fluttered like a moth. She had already settled that the girl was to live with her as soon as the money came into her possession—which would now be within the month—and it must be admitted that if Sara had desired to make a cross-cut into society, she could not have chosen a better guide than Phyllis Gainsley.

The month passed on wings, and one morning—or more strictly speaking, one afternoon—Sara awoke to the blissful consciousness that she was the legal, actual possessor of one million dollars!

Miss Gainsley, quivering congratulations, lost no time in whisking the girl to her home. She telephoned for a "competent shopper" and under her subtle suggestions Sara eventually emerged, clothed to the last Premet and Georgette word. Rows of matching shoes and gloves, linens and laces, aided by the thousand-and-one other mysteries of the feminine *tout ensemble*, were added to the list and finally consigned by the newly engaged maid to their fragrant, satin-lined receptacles.

Sara was in raptures—at first; especially when the coveted limousine purred with magic swiftness to her door. Aunt Phyllis, meantime, fine-

seamed her brow over the question of "travel." She discussed with Sara for hours the necessity of brushing up on what Miss Gainsley called "super-culture" — particularly the need of one's having at his tongue's end a stock of that light persiflage which passes for conversation in town drawing-rooms.

Sara was amenable. The preciseness of the instructors engaged for her often struck the girl as funny, but she listened to, and absorbed, most of what they had to say. She soon found their instruction useful in her new life, for her aunt launched her at once upon a tide of dinners, dances, teas, and such-like, all spelled Fashionable with a capital.

For several months, she sated her demanding youth on the things she was told it should demand. Aunt Phyllis was delighted with her adaptability, and began to scheme how best to add money to money by a "fitting" marriage for the girl. She congratulated herself (and others did the same to her) that this should not be a hard matter; especially since the story of Sara's good fortune was already being whispered about by one who made it her business to know, and who flaunted the girl's winning cards to the four winds of select New York, at the same time vouching for the aristocratic Aunt Phyllis.

Accordingly—and with a celerity that delighted Miss Gainsley—Sara soon shot into her social perihelion. Then it was that an aloof young artist, working under his cob-webbed skylight, began to read newspaper accounts of the girl's popularity; and if possible he worked harder than ever.

Sara, however, soon learned that being nightly enmeshed in the web of social frippery was the last thing that in reality appealed to her. After the newness wore off, there seemed



to her to be nothing else. And although she had honestly made up her mind to be very happy and very gay with her money, she had not had her fortune in hand six months before she discovered that, even under Aunt Phyllis's sugared surveillance, she had no talent for conspicuously or felicitously spending one million dollars.

She often surprised herself speculating as to how Mr. Wilbur was making out; and in that connection, she never failed to be conscience-smitten that she had been the cause, in his estimation, of his losing five thousand dollars.

After all, such an amount was not to be regarded exactly in the light of loose change. And besides, she finally concluded severely, no woman really *needed* a whole million. If she had been less grasping and allowed Mr. Wilbur to make what he had then been so sure would be a successful "stab" at getting that five thousand dollar prize, who could say what might have happened?

At the thought of what might have happened Sara blushed. The more she thought of it, the more colorful and conscience-smitten she became. That purse would have given Wilbur his start; and with a start, Sara found herself believing, Howard Wilbur could do almost anything. The day she reached that conclusion, she went to a number of art galleries and exhibits; but she found none of Wilbur's work.

Meantime—which was well for Aunt Phyllis's high hopes—Miss Gainsley was quite in the dark as to this state of affairs in Sara's mind. Indeed, during the whole six months, she had scarcely touched earth; and she rose to her zenith of satisfaction when she finally succeeded in establishing the *entente cordiale* between her niece and a moneyed, very good-blooded young man.

Sara really seemed to like the young man, and all might have gone well if at this point the weaving destinies had not decreed that Aunt Phyllis should accept an invitation for herself and her niece to the Van Vechtens' dinner. A Russian Nihilist took Sara in—incidentally he nearly bored her to death—and on her other hand, the critic Chatrian was seated. This near-sighted gentleman was so engrossed in his dinner companion, however, that beyond the civilities of the occasion, he paid little attention to Sara; so that when the desserts were brought in, she overheard a remark that set her cheeks rivaling the table roses:

"Very excellent work, that of Howard Wilbur, yes. He should have had the prize. He had a subject that—"

Here the Russian asked her a question, and Sara could have choked him. When she was again free to turn to Chatrian, he was evidently concluding his narrative:

"He was—how do you say in English?—chivalrous. But I assure you he has not had one sane moment since he sketched that girl's head. She pleased him so much!"

"Do I understand you to say they will marry?" his companion queried languidly, to hide her ferret-like interest.

"Oh, *mais non!*" with a deprecating shrug. "He cannot marry her. She is a millionaire, and he has no money. He would not be thought a fortune-hunter. He must first work day and night to make a name and a place to offer this beautiful girl. But he is foolish!"

Sara thought so, too. A sudden pulse of joy beat chokingly within her, and the rose color stayed in her cheeks as she tried to picture Wilbur's studio above the hair-dressing shop. One cheap room where a painter was slaving for her—work-

ing with vision, and hoping that worship would touch his brush to genius! Suddenly Sara realized that her lashes were wet—and that this room, too brightly lighted, might reveal their condition. She looked confusedly at the Russian and was relieved to find him occupied in carefully removing the cherries from his macaroon soufflé.

The next hour passed like a dream. She sat in Mrs. Van Vechten's lantern-lighted room, staring unseeing-ly at an improvised stage where, under eerily-changing lights, a honey-haired child compassed a succession of feats under the direction of a crafty-eyed, "paid entertainer." A Van Vechten dinner was always novel. To Sara that night it seemed atrocious. She heard applause, breathed evil-smelling incense and fumes of burnt-out candle wicks mingled with gusts of heavy fragrance from bowls of flowers. Aunt Phyllis at her side nodded drowsily, her crimped hair immaculate, her soul happy. She was having a beautiful time, for the Van Vechtens were—the Van Vechtens.

Suddenly the girl whispered to her:

"I'm going out. I can't stand this awful incense. Just for a breath of air. I'll be back for the talk on—whatever it is."

Aunt Phyllis assented unhearingly, and during a dark moment when four red lights winked evilly from four corners of the stage, Sara managed to slip out unobserved. Down the wide staircase she sped, her satin slippers winged, and with an impatient gesture to an obsequious footman, out into the open where the night's moon-magic made a silver world. Drawn to the curb was a line of motors, huddled affectionately together, their tail-lights gleaming. As Sara picked out her own, an impulse for a spin in the park came to her.

"Aunt Phyllis is good for at least another hour," she reasoned, as she directed a footman to notify her chauffeur and sent another to bring her wrap. Fastening the shining garment close to her throat, she hurried down the steps toward her car.

At the curb she narrowly missed running into a young man who was dashing by. They stopped and looked at each other wordlessly for a second, then with somewhat rushing incoherency exchanged conventional greetings.

"I was on my way to Pelham's in the next block," Wilbur explained, gasping inwardly at the shining Sara, and feeling suddenly as if he were standing on holy ground, in the presence of God's one woman.

"And I'm running away from the Van Vechten's dinner," she laughed. "Just for a turn in the park. I stood Tina's incense as long as I could. The dinner was all candles and pasty, and now they're having theatricals. They're awful!"

"They usually are," he agreed. "I don't blame you for choosing the park. Permit me to say that this makes the second subject thus far to-night upon which we entirely agree."

Sara looked down in some confusion.

"Since we're companionable," he pursued, noting apprehensively that the chauffeur was holding open the door of her limousine, "may I venture to hope you will take me with you? Pelham's, you know, isn't in it with the park."

She appeared to consider.

"If you will promise to see that I get back within half an hour," she finally consented. "By that time Aunt Phyllis may wake up."

Wilbur promised with alacrity. But when the door had snapped shut on them, and he found himself alone in the world with a girl whose small-

est gloved finger he worshiped, he realized how short-sighted he had been in following her into her fragrant limousine. Now, unless he kept his jaws set like a stop-clock . . . well, he could do that. There was his work to talk about. That was a safe subject, and to his relief Sara appeared interested.

"But I think," she averred as they finally turned homeward, "that you are working too hard. Don't you ever—" she hesitated— "take any time to see your friends?"

"I shall some day," he answered.

"Some day!" she scorned to his surprise. "Everybody knows that 'some day' never comes. I, for one, Mr. Wilbur, do not choose to wait."

"But, my dear Miss Stannard," he began stumblingly.

"If your work means so much to you," she pursued poutingly.

"Only as a means to an end," he hastened to assure her.

"To what end?" she questioned instantly, her clear eyes on his face.

He did not immediately reply. Finally he said slowly:

"I can't tell you—to-night. There is something I wish very much to possess, and I can't have it—until I have made a name for myself. And money—a considerable amount of money."

"This is something you wish to buy?"

"N-not exactly," he floundered. And then, catching himself, he added: "No, not at all! It cannot be bought."

"Then aren't you foolish to work so hard to make money? Perhaps you are slaving for nothing."

He looked at her doubtfully, but her face was turned from him and he caught only the shadowy allurements of her profile. He was additionally disturbed at that moment by the shimmering wrap she wore mysteriously touching his arm, although

he could have sworn that she had not moved an inch.

"I don't believe that money will bring you happiness," she continued in low-voiced earnestness. "I have money, and—" her voice seemed to recede from him—"I am not happy."

"You!"

"Let me tell you," she added, while he sat staring at the flowers in the holder opposite, and wondering in how many years or centuries or—then her words broke the train of his thoughts: "I am going to tell you something, Mr. Wilbur, that I could not speak of to anyone else. I feel that you will understand. Perhaps you will know what I ought to do. I—" she paused, straining at her gloves—"now, do please understand. I have come to care—very deeply for a man, and—did you speak?"

After a second, the reply came:

"No, Miss Stannard."

"And I don't believe this man is ever going to ask me to marry him, just because he knows I have this unnecessary, silly million. He is poor—or he thinks he is—and so proud! You've no idea, Mr. Wilbur, how proud and high-headed and haughty-spirited he is! Yet I think—of course, I may be mistaken—but I'm quite sure that he cares for me."

"Cares!" Howard exploded. "What man in his right senses could help lo—" Then, furiously red-faced, he checked himself suddenly.

"What were you saying?" she queried softly.

He dug at the floor of the limousine with his stick.

"You know what I started to say," he vouchsafed uneasily.

"Perfectly," she acquiesced. "Why didn't you finish? You were going to say that no man in his right senses could help loving me, now weren't you?"

"Really, Miss Stannard," he began deprecatingly.

"No man," she repeated musically, and this time, unmistakably, the silken wrap came a fraction of an inch nearer. "You are a man, Mr. Wilbur . . ."

He tried to stare out of the limousine; but in the end, as he knew he would do, he looked at Sara—looked at her as if for the first time he saw how adorable and slender and silken and close she was. And with his worship rose rebellion.

"What are you trying to make me say?" he asked huskily.

"You know," she reminded him, for all the world with the attitude of one who waits for an enchantment to work.

"And you think—if I said it—that it would be fair to this man you were just telling me about?"

"Perfectly," she assured him quickly.

Wilbur sat silent. He knew then that he was merely another man who would never, so long as he lived, understand women.

But Sara continued—and if heliotrope could be given a voice it would doubtless have that intonation:

"Did you mean—that you—care for me?"

Then Howard turned and dropped his hand swiftly over her gloved one.

"I adore you!" he answered. "You know it well enough. Now I hope you are satisfied."

For several minutes after that, neither spoke. Howard stared straight ahead of him, unconscious that his hand was still warmly closed over Sara's white gloves. At intervals the brilliance of an arc-light streamed into the limousine. They left the park and purred across to the Drive.

Finally Wilbur said gently:

"You mustn't think that I'm going

to make myself unhappy because you can't return my love. I don't suppose I ever really expected—" but he broke off suddenly, uncertain of the sound that came to him from Sara's direction.

"Don't you know," she began spiritedly, although her voice sounded muffled, "that it is very ungallant, very horrid, very bad form to tell a girl you—love her, and then not to—ask her to marry you?"

"Sara!" Wilbur's voice was stern.

"You know it is," she nodded back at him reproachfully, turning just enough so that he could see the color in her cheeks. "If you really cared—" she went on mysteriously, starting to withdraw her hands.

Wilbur retained them savagely.

"Look here," he said tensely. "Am I in a position to ask a girl to marry me—especially one worth what you are worth? Would you have me—"

"Yes, I would have you, Howard," she intercepted, suddenly very slender and silken and close against his arm. "My million has nothing whatever to do with it. I do wish you could get that money out of your mind for a moment!"

"That money!" he repeated in a bewildered tone. And then he shot out quickly: "I've never had my mind on that million in my life!"

Sara laughed, and slowly, very slowly, understanding dawned on Howard.

"You meant *me*?" he choked out rapturously. "All the time you meant *me*?"

"Is there—was there ever anyone else?" she stammered shyly. And this time she was not near him, but crowded away in a corner of the limousine, her silken wrap crushed against the pink-flowered brocade.

# CHOOSING A LIFE WORK

## THE PROFESSION OF JOURNALISM

By ROLLIN LYNDE HARTT

*[This is the second of a series of articles discussing the various professions and businesses from the standpoint of a man to whom his calling has brought success. Mr. Hartt served for many years and in various capacities on the staff of The Boston Evening Transcript, and has had wide experience as a magazine writer besides. He is the author of two books, "The People at Play" and "Understanding the French." The next article in the series will be "The Profession of Art," by Jay Hambidge.—EDITOR.]*

YOU can insure yourself against burglars, shipwreck, accident, fire and sudden death, but not against joining the journalists. From that no one is secure.

I have seen a manufacturer forsake his tall chimneys for journalism, and a roofer his roof and a violinist his bow. I have known a higher critic who did as much, to say nothing of a political economist, a half dozen ministers, and a studio model. Presently you, too, may be recording events before they occur, and eating your supper in the morning.

Or perhaps you may find yourself hiring out to Beelzebub, like my gifted friend Derby, the "re-write man." A reporter telephones him a bare fact or so; to wit, it was at such a time and at such a number of such a street that they found the poor girl. Beyond this, Derby knows nothing and can give genius a free rein.

Without leaving his desk, he interviews the bereaved parents. He discovers the hidden love letters. He takes down the depositions of seven different suitors in seven different dialects. He picks up blood-curdling clues in New York, Chicago, Honolulu and the extremest East. Two blazing columns, as fast as his pencil will fly.

"And the beauty of it is," he tells me, "a similar crime is likely to follow within a few days, and when the malefactor is caught he generally says he got the idea from my story."

I must own, however, that my friends Burke and Henderson got on less happily with Beelzebub. Burke quit because the City Editor told him to go and snap the eye-less profile of a one-eyed and morbidly sensitive mayor. As for Henderson, here is what occurred.

In a room where a race track gambler had just committed suicide, he saw the photograph of a prominent church soprano. It had been on sale during a musical festival and evidently the sporting man had bought it, just as, evidently, he had bought the unautographed pictures of actresses beside it on the bureau. How else could it have got there? The lady was married and above reproach. So Henderson concluded to keep it dark. But when a rival paper came out with the whooping front page sensation, "Slays Self for Love of Beautiful Church Soloist" it was the end of Henderson. Discharged—"for suppressing interesting news!"

I am not romancing, I am telling these things as they occur, and I may



add that they indicate a great foolishness. For the guilty papers are not prospering. Instead, they conduct "beauty contests," give premiums, send up balloons and hide gold pieces under doorsteps, whereas the highly respectable daily in that same town is wallowing in wealth.

Come, come! Who are this world's prize donkeys? The saints? No, the scalawags.

Every little while, somebody proclaims the awful discovery that "journalism is not a profession but a business," yet just that, if nothing else, should keep it civilized. Purely as a business proposition, decency pays. There are millions in it.

Scoffers poke fun at the pretty nearly ideal newspaper I served for twelve years and, when I can find the leisure, still serve. Some call it "maidenly," some "grandmotherly." But the joking stops when I mention the dividends and explain them.

Clean, able, honest, and written in English, not Newspaperish, that venerable sheet (or closer to forty sheets) sells for three cents and is read by women as well as men—the women, that is, of rich families. Consequently, big advertisers "dig down" enthusiastically, as it is the sphere of woman to spend our money. If you are marketing priceless rugs, or old masters, or first editions, or a villa with twenty-two bathrooms: behold the perfect medium.

Not a large circulation, I admit, but who cares? It is quality that counts. Quantity attracts advertisements of two-cent socks and third-floor backs in rowdy boarding houses—gratifying enough in their way, but a lot less remunerative than the sort that reads: "They cost like fury; come in and see why."

Now, while advertisers reward a paper for being good, so do its editors and reporters. Like officers in the British army, they take part of

their pay in glory. To make ends meet they will cheerfully act as "passionate press agents" for theaters, write books and magazine articles, or manage suburban weeklies. Meanwhile contributors come prancing—celebrities, even.

"I don't think much of your rates," wrote Miss Carolyn Wells, "but I want to see the enclosed in your paper, as my friends say it confers a kind of canonization on a sinner." I wired back, "Canonization complete."

Those were glowing days, with university presidents contributing, and famous authors and authors since famous, and a publisher now serving as Ambassador to the Court of St. James. We put in the respectability, they the sparkle.

Doesn't that beat sending up balloons and hiding gold pieces? Doesn't it beat humiliating one-eyed mayors and slandering church soloists and promoting crime? More and more papers every year are seeing money in decency, and if my boys develop the newspaper instinct I shall not hang my head, for I trust they have also inherited the sense to go where the most fun is.

However, I am far from calling even the best journalism unalloyed fun. Reporting John L. Sullivan's benefit was, when the renowned Lanky Bob concluded a eulogy of "the grandest fighter God ever made" by declaiming, "An' now, as he steps down the westerin' slopes toward the sunset o' life, may peace an' good will go with 'im, is the wish of 'is friend, Robert G. Fitzsimmons." Moreover, it was fun interviewing Jerome K. Jerome, and pumping the Mormons, and tracking our local Anarchists and going down in the wheelpit at Niagara and, by dint of staying on at the Bi-Centennial of a New England village after the other reporters had left, seeing two hun-

dred academy boys dancing in nighties over their clothes on the lawn before an academy for young ladies. Magnificent! A scoop.

But I can't say it is fun waiting, waiting, waiting for the exceedingly precious individual you must catch and who will positively be back nobody knows when. I can't say it is fun copying "news" from a police docket: "Terence Hogan, unmarried, drunk, two days"; nor is it news. I am quite sure it was not fun combing the rural glades all day for a sect that "had assembled to witness the end of the world," and finding that no such sect existed.

In many respects, "handling special features" is fun. Your office teems with would-be contributors in endless variety. I recall an ex-convict or two, an Arctic explorer, a stowaway, Josiah Flynt, a Hungarian duellist, nice girls, several war correspondents, a poet, and a manufacturer of dynamite. Besides, there came a drummer "carrying a line of strictly high-class fiction," as he said, also a sweet old gentleman who handed me a photograph: "There, sir, did you ever see a more beautiful young lady than that? She is just eighteen and has gone on the stage. You know the temptations. Dreadful!" Then, drawing out a manuscript, "Now, sir, I believe that if you publish this article of hers it will encourage her to be a good girl."

So far, lovely, yet I was writing headlines a great part of the time, or reading rubbish, or letting people unfold their plans by the yard and never hearing from them again, or, worst of all, correcting proof. Yes, it was I who let through "old Charybdis ferrying the souls across the Styx."

When that happened, I could sympathize with the Telegraph Editor, who, by fumbling a mere date-line, wrecked a six-masted schooner at Butte, Mont., though a more mi-

nutely scrupulous telegraph editor never handled "flimsy." A genius, that man! In war time, he has one continuous lark, poking holes in doubtful despatches, discounting "our despised but esteemed contemporaries," and writing, "Thousands Not Killed." He was the first to expose Dr. Cook, simply by comparing lecture with lecture and pointing out inconsistencies. And yet I suspect that, like most other journalists, he is secretly "saving up money to buy a farm."

Or maybe he is wishing he could devote his undivided energies to writing editorials. Personally, I love that job, and hate it. I love it when the facts tally with the editorial. I hate it when, as once happened, a tribute to Dr. Washington Gladden on the occasion of his reported retirement from the ministry brings the response, "Thanks for the taffy, but take away the epitaph. I am alive and kicking and have not resigned." That sort of experience is too much like teaching. You say to the class, "Dearly beloved youngsters, it is thus and so." Then you go home and look in the book and see that it isn't.

Sad, very—almost as sad as writing jokes. I know about jokes. Alas, I have turned out paragraphs! Every morning, for six years at a stretch, I was under bonds to deliver twelve alleged witticisms on the day's news by exactly ten minutes past ten. Huge sport, when the spirit moved or when something comic had occurred—Governor Hock accused of kissing a woman, so that one could scribble, "Hoch der Kisser!" or the Count de Castellane cutting up once more and suggesting the easy comment, "*Boni soit qui mal y pense.*" But at other times, ghastly; making straw without bricks.

It is even a bitter-sweet adventure "running a column." You enjoy a

wondrous freedom. A good deal in the position of a court jester, you can play, at fool-killing; if the fools come storming in, your chief will save your dignity by saying, "Don't mind him, he is only our caged monkey." And, unlike most writers, you are allowed to compose essays. People still read essays, if they are a mere matter of two or three hundred words, with rows of asterisks in between. They especially relish reading the asterisks, which, by the way, are much the pleasantest to write.

As for the essays, they, too, would be jolly work were you not forced to do them regularly, mood or no mood, two batches a week or perhaps seven, a demon with a flaming sword standing over you and snarling, "Scintillate—darn you!—scintillate!" After six months of daily nightmare, I yearned to pass the residue of eternity editing obituaries for the *Gehenna Evening Sob*; which was foolish, of course, for there were ships sailing and I could have fled the country. Once upon a time I did.

Oh, that joyous life in Paris, "firing home copy!" You read the French papers, tear around and see things, and, when steamer day approaches, take your pick of a dozen unspoiled topics. Or even translate, as the Paris press overflows with brilliant special articles signed by publicists, novelists, dramatists and scientists famous everywhere. More and more, we shall help ourselves to them. Thanks to the war, Europe no longer seems remote. America has discovered the world.

Reporting, editing, paragraphing, corresponding—rather a varied experience, looked at from outside, but from the newspaper standpoint, how narrow! One of the many and highly variegated types I have met among journalists earns his bread by hatching six-headed chickens, sea-serpents, wild girls and phantom airships. We

have a recognized trade name for these "silly season" fillers. "Pipe-stories," we call them. Then, too, I remember a lady—the wife of a distinguished philosopher—who peddled "love stuff." "Are Blondes More Faithful Than Brunettes?" "Marjorie F.: No, I cannot advise you to accept tiaras from married men." And so it went, with a humbug portrait of the fair monitress of youth at the top of her column. Besides, I recall a nature-writer who kept snakes in his house, and a person who advertised as an "idea man" (sample "idea"; start your readers to voting for "the most popular postman"), and ever so many syndicate fellows, with their visions of bewitching creatures in bloomers getting strong by twirling palm leaf fans. "Hot demand!" says the syndicate chieftain. "Don't you know that there are papers that make it a rule never to come out without pictures of at least six handsome women?"

So it is a big question, when you go into journalism, what you will "do." Anything, almost, from "gumshoe stunts" to coronations, or from "picture-chasing" to Washington correspondence, or from "City Hall" to reviewing twelve books in a morning. But it is a vastly bigger question what journalism will do to you. Some it drives mad.

Now, I am perfectly aware that outside circumstances may have been partly to blame in each instance, but I have witnessed some awful smash-ups. An excellent friend of mine lost himself one day and came to, after weeks and weeks, in a distant city. Another went to a private asylum, escaped, and threw himself into the sea. A third, the last I heard of him, was recovering from a "brainstorm." I spent a thousand dollars, once, getting over an attack of "news-paperitis," though happily the symptoms were not mental.

The "inside men" drop first. Think of sparkling "against time" with typewriters clacking, a telephone switchboard buzzing, leather cart-ridges banging through tubes, telegraph instruments tick-a-tick-ticking and men calling out to one another in sharp tones directly behind you! There are but two palliatives—smoke and strong drink. We smoked like chimneys, and it is a wonder that so very few of us tipped. One died of it, the other day—a brilliant fellow, too!

Most journalists know better, though those on a certain illustrious metropolitan daily are treating one another perpetually so as to "stand in" with the "machine" that governs promotions. Quite exceptional, this. Teetotalers abound among us. It is an antiquated fragment, now, the recipe for a special article: "Pen, ink, paper, a pipe and a quart of whiskey." Alcohol spoils comment. Professor James settled that. "It inhibits collateral ideas."

Of course, it makes you forget that you are somebody else's man—if you are; that, in the vernacular, you wear a "collar"—if you do. A few do. "What's your opinion of Bryan?" a journalist asked a comrade after the Cross of Gold speech. "Sha'n't know till I've seen Pulitzer," said the other. And yet in fifteen years I have never personally known a journalist to be wearing a "collar," nor was I ever asked to write a thing I did not believe, though I admit getting pounced upon rather fervently for writing a thing or two I did. Before publication, however. One that got printed cost the paper a fine "slab" of advertising, but not a syllable reached me from the Managing Editor.

Here I approach ticklish ground, for people tell me "the papers are 'owned.'" I suppose they imagine somebody calls up, every ten or fifteen minutes, and shouts, "Make her

say this, and I'll pay extra," or, "Make her say that, or out comes my *ad!*" Whereas, hardly. So far as my observation goes, a paper's attitude toward the advertisers is like a merchant's toward his customers. He will not single them out for deliberate and needless persecution. They are old friends; also the source of his bread and butter. Still, when honor demands it, he will have the spunk to show them their place.

Does this seem to imply that the press, as I have known it, is out-and-out incorruptible? Then let me confess that twice I have seen underlings "bought." A railroad did it, by paying them ridiculous sums for alleged "publicity work." I am not sure that they "delivered the goods"—probably not—but I know the row there was when their papers found it out. They caught it, then, almost as savagely as the university professor involved in the same "deal."

Now, you might spend a lifetime in journalism without witnessing a case like that. What one does witness is a much less flagrant kind of "influence": people dropping in to lobby for "causes," people extending graceful courtesies masking the axe to grind, and people haunting newspaper offices in order not to let you forget their existence. A smiling, suave, genial set, these self-advertisers. "What is fame? Politeness to journalists."

On the whole, we resist. Lobbyists, toadies, and publicity-seekers to the contrary notwithstanding, we "draw the thing as we see it." This takes grit, sometimes, and I could wish it were less easy to raise a laugh by a mere offhand reference to "the journalistic passion for truth." For there is no denying that we incline toward inaccuracy and occasionally even toward injustice.

The inaccuracy comes partly from haste, partly from "inspiration,"

partly from the dangerous protection of anonymity. We can't wait to verify facts; at that rate, there would be no newspapers. We can't keep cool, always, in our excitement to catch the next edition. And meanwhile there is the knowledge that probably no one will corner us afterward and say, "I read your whopper. Aren't you ashamed?" We should be a good deal more careful if we signed our "stuff" every time, as a great share of the French journalists do.

And also we should be more just, though even then we should have to combat our inborn Yankee proneness to personify calamities and heap retribution on a "goat." Given a railway smash, and the "goat's" name is Mellen, say; given a *Titanic* disaster, and it is Bruce Ismay. And we let the "goat" have it, hot and heavy, far beyond his deserts.

This is an excellent arrangement, from the primitive and correctional point of view. Corporations show little dread of justice. To make them behave, terrorize them with injustice. The blinder and madder and more vindictive the injustice, the more effectual. And yet the consequence to the journalists themselves is not fortunate. They lose something of their poise, something of their grip, something of their sense of proportion—in a word, something of their fitness for journalism. Incidentally, they become hard.

All journalists are, outwardly. "Seventeen Dago children drowned. Bully!" cries the City Editor in "The Third Estate," and there is a saying among us, "A celebrity who will die at four o'clock in the morning is no gentleman." Once I heard a reporter who had returned from a funeral say he had been "covering a croakfest." During Pope Leo's last illness, I had a splendid biography prepared and itched to bring it out. Finally, my chief lost patience. "It's up to him,"

he said. "Noblesse oblige!" And I well remember my indignation when Ibsen pigeonholed a magnificent obituary by going skating.

It is outrageous, all this, and yet only skin-deep. But sometimes it takes a far less excusable form. There are papers that will review the "record" of a poor devil just discharged from prison and anxious to mend his ways. What chance has he, when they "dig it up on him?" There are papers that coolly blast the reputations of young girls and exploit divorce scandals without pity. How vastly better these things are ordered in France! Over there, the woman in the case appears only as "Madame X."

Off duty, the least chivalrous of our journalists and the most cruel are gentlemen, like as not. On duty they regard the unfortunates in the news almost as fictitious characters—not as people, but as "copy." The minute an unfortunate comes along, visible and begging for mercy, they soften. Many of them are quick to "suppress interesting news" when it involves some one they know. They will even do it on principle, now and then. During a particularly abominable murder trial, I saw the entire press of a big city stand together in a conspiracy of silence regarding certain nauseating details.

So I conclude that when journalists sin, it is because they don't stop to consider consequences and because they have brains built in air-tight compartments, one for business, the other for human relationships. That is a common enough thing among us. Though not morally, it is our salvation physically and mentally. Doctors lie awake nights worrying about their patients. Lawyers lie awake nights worrying about their clients. Ministers lie awake nights worrying about their parishioners. But, once his day's



task is done, a journalist pulls down the lid of his desk, lights a cigar, and starts home free from anxieties. Otherwise, he would perish.

This, however, is not saying that his profession doesn't go tagging after him. The concentration that enables him to write amid pandemonium breeds an absent-mindedness that horrifies his wife. The habit of turning the whole world into "copy" tempts him to value people and experience and even play for "what there is in them." Interest becomes his ruling passion—literary interest, I mean—and it also becomes his curse. Everywhere he goes, he is fitting words to impressions, seeing special articles in this, that, and the other, and commenting, commenting, as if for print. He has taken his fun where he found it, and now he must pay for his fun.

And what, meanwhile, is befalling the thing he calls his "style"? Will he graduate from journalism into literature? That is the theory, I know, but I have watched. Of the graduates of the paper I have mainly served, one became an assessor, another a clergyman, another publicity man for a brewery. As for out-and-out authorship, I know but a single case.

This despite my paper's pronounced literary quality. Most papers lack that, and check the first symptom of literature in a "cub." He is not there to write, he is there to report. The more alike reporters are, the handier for the City Editor; if Jones is out, he can send Smith. Besides, genius is erratic when young and may "fall down"; whereas mediocrity, born so or trained so, can be relied upon. Promising nothing, it never disappoints.

On the other hand, there are papers that stimulate cleverness to the pitch of vulgar smartness. "Now see here, my boy, don't you dare

come back without a snorting good story!" As an apprenticeship for literature, nothing could be more absurd, and if the victim amounts to something eventually, it is not because of such discipline but in spite of it.

Certain ingredients of authorship a newspaper man acquires—namely, application, disregard of mood, a dauntless self-confidence, and any amount of material. But style, scarcely. Instead, he is apt to gain a "fatal facility" and a stock of stereotyped phrases, along with the knack of speeding up his pen by taking that "shortest way home" which is "the longest way round." Style he will rarely cultivate until after his escape—that is, unless he happens to be Literary Editor or Dramatic Critic, with no one to boss him, or, luck favoring, a "free-lance."

But why discuss graduation and escape when, for the bulk of us, journalism is a life sentence, with small hope even of promotion? If I look in at the office I first entered fifteen years ago, there are the same reporters, mainly, and the same editors. Except for three or four dazzling successes, it is death, often—er than promotion, that has brought changes. For journalists specialize. When a man becomes an expert in his own field, why shift him? Rather than that, muffle his wails by giving him a somewhat fatter envelope "when the ghost walks."

Some papers, it is true, "fire" men every few days, to prod industry and sparkle by means of scare. Some are always grabbing at new men, wringing them dry, and "shipping" them. The *Sun*, in the old days, shook up its entire staff periodically, making its Musical Editor "do" sports and its Piety Editor "police." But, although there is a chance of promotion wherever journalistic

earthquakes prevail, there is also a chance of your leaving "a brilliant future behind you" or proceeding as men do in the publishing business. There, so I hear, you "begin as president and proprietor, and work down gradually from that."

For my own part, I never complained of the monotony of sticking to one job. I complained of the deadly variety. I became track-sick, dulled, blasé. Where everything was so intensely interesting, nothing was. Actually, the day came when they told me to go and interview Mark Twain and I answered, "Oh, let George do it!"

It was then that I determined to flee the country, though in many cases fleeing the city would serve as well. By way of "gingering up" the track-sick and blasé, why not exchange editorships and exchange reporterships, letting Boston swap men with New York, New York with St. Louis, St. Louis with Philadelphia? A further advantage, it would remedy our crude and narrow sectionalism.

Now is the time to drop hints to the papers. The war has shaken them to their foundations. It has made yellow papers truthful, temporarily, silly papers sensible, temporarily; big papers little, temporarily. Do they sigh for the old ruts?

I fancy not, and I am sure their readers don't. Papers that print less and print it in rather larger type, with leaded lines, are by no means unwelcome. Very few readers ever valued the ten-dollar fires, the small pilferings, and the collections of trivial oddities. True, it was the great Dana who said, "If you see a dog biting a man, drop it; but if you see a man biting a dog, wire us, quick"; and yet the principle was frightfully overworked and always fallacious. According to that, the chief news-center would be the madhouse. Dis-

regarding the weirdly trivial, and somewhat "spreading" the text, affords the same amount of "space next pure reading matter," saves money, and is a relief to our wits as well as to our eyes.

People are at last finding out what journalism is for. If his trolley-car was detained seventeen minutes, a certain sort of man used to say to himself on opening his evening paper, "Ah, now for a full account of my scrape!" If the full account was there, he cheered. If it wasn't he growled. To-day, he is outgrowing all that. Instead of prizing a newspaper for its attention to the infinitely little, he prizes it for its honest, sane, interpretative consideration of the infinitely big. He, too, has discovered the world.

When the remoter parts of it quiet down, he will still relish accounts of the infinitely big here at home, and—pardon the suggestion—is not this precisely what our press has frequently overlooked. For often times the infinitely big things happening are ideas. They are talk. They occur at mass meetings, "hearings," dinners and in clubs, and would "make mighty interesting reading" were there fellows on hand to nab sparkle when they see it. I don't care to learn next morning that "the list of speakers was as follows." I want to know the capital good things that were said. I would rather have a stickful of that than a column informing me that another motorist has been fined; another pickpocket "sent up," another shop slightly damaged by smoke and water, another actress robbed of diamonds that she never possessed. Like the poor, these insignificant phenomena are always with us. Probably they always will be. Let us note them down. But let us make them leave space in a paper for news.

A splendid profession our new journalism will be. You will fall in with jolly comrades, have fun and get paid for it, respect yourself and be respected, and, with the rest, wield a tremendous influence—that is, if you have the right stuff in you. People say, "Of course, we can't believe what we see in the papers," yet is it not true that everybody does?

So here you are, I suspect, face to face with the raw recruit's problem when Captain "Bob" Evans's ship was going into action off Santiago. "Say, Mister!" shouted the boy, slapping "Fighting Bob" on the shoulder, "I'm assigned to that turret."

"Yes," said his captain, "that is your turret."

"B-but," stammered the recruit, "how the d-d-deuce do I get in it?"

The point, exactly. Journalism is your turret. Then "how the d-d-deuce do you get in it?" Every journalist will answer, "By becoming a reporter." Which implies, "Beard a managing editor in his den, enumerate your charms and land the job." Whereas, it is possible that "the man who manages the editor" will not see it that way. Seriously, what are the charms that should convince him, and what the qualities you need? In brief, these:

Magnificent health, so as not to go smash under the strain; entire sobriety; abstention from tobacco—you will eat all the smoke that is good for you later on; "leg-talent," meaning the willingness to go and find out a thing instead of making it up; ver-

acity, plus horse-sense; a decent command of English, along with the ability not to write, "Ten thousand tons of ice were reduced to ashes"; obedience enough to do what they tell you to or get out; and the biggest store of information you can amass in college and elsewhere, especially from newspapers. To a considerable extent, each news topic is a serial. You need to have in your head a "synopsis of preceding chapters."

As for a course in some school of journalism, I see no harm in that. Try the Pulitzer establishment at Columbia, if you like, or a similar department at the University of Missouri, or that at the University of Wisconsin, or any one of about thirty others. But don't imagine that a managing editor will necessarily adore you at first sight on that account. By what I hear, you may be handsomely pooh-poohed. My young friend "Powwow," after graduating from the Pulitzer institution, started in at six dollars a week.

A dash of fluting notoriety works on a managing editor's feelings a lot more effectually, I believe. Write special articles, sign them, and if they kick up a fuss, so much the better. Somewhere in an old scrapbook, I have preserved a "roast" of myself clipped from the editorial page of the *New York Sun*. All that is forgotten now, but it won me a splendid position, and, in a less solemn mood than the present, I could say to the *Sun*, "Thanks! Consider yourself kissed!"



# JUDITH'S CREED

BY JAMES BRANCH CABELL

*"It does not appear that the age thought his works worthy of posterity, nor that this great poet himself levied any ideal tribute on future times, or had any further prospect than of present popularity and present profit. So careless was he, indeed, of fame, that, when he retired to ease and plenty, while he was yet little declined into the vale of years, and before he could be disgusted with fatigue or disabled by infirmity, he desired only that in this rural quiet he who had so long mazed his imagination by following phantoms might at last be cured of his delirious ecstasies, and as a hermit might estimate the transactions of the world."*

HE was hoping, while his fingers drummed in unison with the beat of his verse, that this last play at least would rouse enthusiasm in the pit. The welcome given its immediate predecessors had undeniably been tepid. A memorandum at his elbow, of the receipts at the Globe for the last quarter, showed this with disastrous bluntness; and, after all, in 1609 a shareholder in a theater, when writing dramas for production there, was ordinarily subject to more claims than those of his ideals.

He sat in a neglected garden whose growth was in reversion to primal habits. The season was September, the sky a uniform if tempered blue. A peach-tree, laden past its strength with fruitage, made about him with its boughs a sort of tent. The grass around his writing-table was largely hidden by long, crinkled peach leaves—some brown and others gray as yet—and was dotted with a host of brightly-colored peaches. Fidgeting bees and flies were excavating the decayed spots in this wasting fruit, from which emanated a vinous odor. The bees hummed drowsily, their industry facilitating idleness in others. It was curious—he meditated, his thoughts straying from "an uninhabited island"—how these insects alternated in color between brown vel-

vet and silver, as they blundered about a flickering tessellation of amber and somber green . . . in search of rottenness . . .

He frowned. Here was an arid forenoon as imagination went. A seasoned plagiarist by this, he opened a book which lay upon the table among many others and duly found the chapter entitled "Of the Cannibals."

"So, so!" he said aloud. "'It is a nation, would I answer Plato, that has no kind of traffic, no knowledge of letters—.'" And with that he sat about reshaping Montaigne's conceptions of Utopia into verse. He wrote—while his left hand held the book flat—as orderly as any county clerk might do in the recordance of a deed of sale.

Midcourse in larceny, he looked up from his writing. He saw a tall, dark lady who was regarding him half sorrowfully and half as in the grasp of some occult amusement. He said nothing. He released the tell-tale book. His eyebrows lifted, bantering, before he rose.

He found it characteristic of her that she went silently to the table and compared the printed page with what he had just written. "So nowadays you have turned pickpocket of wit? My poet, you have altered."

He said: "Why, yes. When you broke off our friendship I paid you the expensive compliment of falling very ill. They thought that I would die. They tell me even to-day I did not die. I almost question it." He shrugged. "And to-day I must continue to write plays, because I never learned any other trade. And so, at need, I pilfer." The topic did not seem much to concern him.

"Eh, and such plays!" the woman cried. "My poet, there was a time when you created men and women as glibly as Heaven does. Now you make sugar-candy dolls."

"The last comedies were not all I could have wished," he assented. "In fact, I got only some thirty pounds clear profit."

"There speaks the little tradesman I most hate I of all persons living!" the woman sighed. Now, as in impatience, she thrust back her traveling-hood and stood bare-headed.

Then she stayed silent—tall, extraordinarily pallid, and with dark, steady eyes. Their gaze by ordinary troubled you, as seeming to hint some knowledge to your belittlement. The playwright remembered that. Now he, a reputable householder, was wondering what would be the upshot of this intrusion. His visitor, as he was perfectly aware, had little patience with such moments of life as could not be made dramatic . . . He was recollecting many trifles, now his mind ran upon old times . . . No, no, reflection assured him, to call her beautiful would be, and must always have been, an exaggeration; but to deny the exotic and somewhat sinister charm of her, even to-day, would be an absurdity.

She said, abruptly: "I do not think I ever loved you as women love men. You were too anxious to associate with fine folk, too eager to secure a patron—yes, and to get your profit

of him—and you were always ill-at-ease among us. Our youth is so long past, and we two are so altered that we, I think, may speak of its happenings now without any bitterness. I hated those sordid, petty traits. I raged at your incessant pretensions to gentility because I knew you to be so much more than a gentleman. Oh, it infuriated me—how long ago it was—to see you cringing to the Court blockheads, and running their errands, and smirkingly pocketing their money, and wheedling them into helping the new play to success. You complained I treated you like a lackey; it was not unnatural when of your own free will you played the lackey so assiduously."

He laughed. He had anatomized himself too frequently and with too much dispassion to overlook whatever tang of snobbishness might be in him; and, moreover, the charge thus tendered became in reality the speaker's apology, and hurt nobody's self esteem.

"Faith, I do not say you are altogether in the wrong," he assented. "They could be very useful to me—Pembroke, and Southampton, and those others—and so I endeavored to render my intimacy acceptable. It was my business as a poet to make my play as near perfect as I could; and this attended to, common-sense demanded of the theater manager that he derive as much money as was possible from its representation. What would you have? The man of letters, like the carpenter or the blacksmith, must live by the vending of his productions, not by the eating of them."

The woman waved this aside.

She paced the grass in meditation, the peach leaves brushing her proud head—caressingly, it seemed to him. Later she came nearer in a brand-new mood. She smiled now, and her voice was musical and thrilled with



wonder. "But what a poet Heaven had locked inside this little parasite! It used to puzzle me." She laughed, and ever so lightly. "Eh, and did you never understand why by preference I talked with you at evening from my balcony? It was because I could forget you then entirely. There was only a voice in the dark. There was a sorcerer at whose bidding words trooped like a conclave of emperors, and now sang like a bevy of linnets. And wit and fancy and high aspirations and my love—because I knew then that your love for me was splendid and divine—these also were my sorcerer's potent allies. I understood then how glad and awed were those fabulous Greekish queens when a god wooed them. Yes, then I understood. How long ago it seems!"

"Yes, yes," he sighed. "In that full-blooded season was Guenevere a lass, I think, and Charlemagne was not yet in breeches."

"And when there was a new play enacted I was glad. For it was our play, that you and I had polished the last line of yesterday, and all these people wept and laughed because of what we had done. And I was proud—" The lady shrugged impatiently. "Proud, did I say? And glad? That attests how woefully I fall short of you, my poet. You would have found some magic phrase to make that ancient glory articulate, I know. Yet—did I ever love you? I do not know that. I only know I sometimes fear you robbed me of the power of loving any other man."

"I must remind you," he cried, whimsically, "that a burnt child dreads even to talk of fire."

Her response was a friendly nod. She came yet nearer. "What," she demanded, and her smile was elfish, "what if I had lied to you? What if I wanted you to plead with me as in the old time?"

He said: "Until now you were only a woman. Oh, and now, my dear, you are Love. You are Youth. You are Comprehension. You are all that I have lost and hunger for. Here in this abominable village, there is no one who understands—not even those who are more dear to me than you are. I know. I only spoil good paper which might otherwise be profitably used to wrap herrings in, they think. They give me ink and a pen just as they would give toys to a child who squalled for them too obstinately. And Poesy is a thrifty oracle with no words to waste upon the deaf, however loudly her interpreter cry out to her. Oh, I have hungered for you, my proud dark lady!" the playmaker said.

Afterward they stood quite silent. She was not unmoved by his outcry; and for this very reason was obscurely vexed by the reflection that it would be the essay of a braver man to remedy, rather than to lament, his circumstances. And then the moment's rapture failed him.

"I am a sorry fool," he said; and lightly he ran on: "You are a skilful witch. Yet you have raised the ghost of an old madness to no purpose. You seek a master-poet? You will find none here. Perhaps I was one once. But most of us are poets of one sort or another when we love. Do you not understand? To-day I do not love you any more than I do Hecuba. Is it not strange that I should tell you this and not be moved at all? Is it not laughable that we should stand here at the last, two feet apart as things physical go, and be as profoundly severed as if an ocean tumbled between us?"

He fell to walking to and fro, his hands behind his back. She waited, used as she was to his unstable temperament, a trifle puzzled. Presently he spoke:

"There was a time when a master-

poet was needed. He was found—nay, rather made. Fate hastily caught up a man not very different from the run of men—one with a taste for stringing phrases and with a comedy or so to his discredit. Fate merely bid him love a headstrong child newly released from the nursery."

"We know her well enough," she said. "The girl was faithless, and tyrannous, and proud, and coquettish, and unworthy, and false, and inconstant. She was black as hell and dark as night in both her person and her living. You were not niggardly of vituperation."

And he grimaced. "Faith," he replied, "but sonnets are a more natural form of expression than affidavits, and they are made effective by compliance with different rules. I find no flagrant fault with you today. You were a child of seventeen, the darling of a noble house, and an actor—yes, and not even a preëminent actor—a gross, poor posturing vagabond, just twice your age, presumed to love you. What child would not amuse herself with such engaging toys? Vivacity and prettiness and cruelty are the most ordinary attributes of kittenhood. So you amused yourself. And I submitted with clear eyes, because I could not help it. Yes, I who am by nature not disposed to underestimate my personal importance—I submitted, because your mockery was more desirable than the adoration of any other woman. And all this helped to make a master-poet of me. Eh, why not, when such monstrous passions spoke through me—as if some implacable god elected to play godlike music on a flimsy lute? And I made admirable plays. Why not, when there was no tragedy more poignant than mine?—and where in any comedy was any figure one-half as ludicrous as mine? So Fate gained her end."

He was a paunchy, inconsiderable little man. By ordinary his elongated features and high, bald forehead loaned him an aspect of serene and axiom-based wisdom, much as we see him in his portraits; but now his countenance was flushed and mobile. Odd passions played about it, as when on a sullen night in August summer lightnings flicker and merge.

His voice had found another cadence. "But Fate was not entirely ruthless. Fate bade the child become a woman, and so grow tired of all her childhood's playthings. This was after a long while, as we estimate happenings . . . I suffered then. Yes, I went down to the doors of death, as people say, in my long illness. But that crude, corporal fever had a providential thievishness; and not content with stripping me of health and strength—not satisfied with pilfering inventiveness and any strong hunger to create—why, that insatiable fever even robbed me of my insanity. I lived. I was only a broken instrument flung by because the implacable god had wearied of playing. I would give forth no more heart-wringing music, for the musician had departed. And I still lived—I, the stout little tradesman whom you loathed. Yes, that tradesman scrambled through these evils, somehow, and came out still able to word adequately all such imaginings as could be devised by his natural abilities. But he transmitted no more heart-wringing music."

She said, "You lie!"

He said, "I thank Heaven daily that I do not." He spoke the truth. She knew it, and her heart was all rebellion.

Indefatigable birds sang through the following hush. A wholesome and temperate breeze caressed these silent people. Bees that would die to-morrow hummed about them tirelessly.

Then the poet said: "I loved you; and you did not love me. It is the most commonplace of tragedies, the heart of every man alive has been wounded in this identical fashion. A master-poet is only that wounded man—among so many other wounded men—who perversely augments his agony, and utilizes his wound as an inkwell. Presently time scars the wound for him, as time does for all the others. He does not suffer any longer. No, and such relief is a clear gain; but none the less he must henceforward write with ordinary ink such as the lawyers use."

"I should have been the man," the woman cried. "Had I been sure of fame, could I have known those raptures when you used to gabble immortal phrases like a stammering infant, I would have paid the price without all this whimpering."

"Faith, and I think you would have," he assented. "There is the difference. At bottom I am a creature of the most moderate aspirations, as you always complained; and for my part, Fate must in reason demand her applause of posterity rather than of me. For I regret the unlive life that I was meant for—the comfortable level life of little happenings which all my school-fellows have passed through in a stolid drove. I was equipped to live that life with relish, and that life only; and it was denied me. It was demolished in order that a book or two be made out of its wreckage."

She said, with half-shut eyes: "There is a woman at the bottom of all this." And how he laughed!

"Did I not say you were a witch? Why, most assuredly there is."

He motioned with his left hand. Some hundred yards away a young man, who was carrying two logs toward New Place, had paused to rest. A girl was with him. Now laughingly she was pretending to assist

the porter in lifting his burden. It was a quaintly pretty vignette, as framed by the peach-leaves, because those two young people were so merry and so candidly in love. A symbolist might have wrung some pathos out of the girl's desire to aid, as set against her fond inadequacy; and the attendant playwright made note of it.

"Well, well!" he said; "Young Quiney is a so-so choice, since women must necessarily condescend to intermarrying with men. But he is far from worthy of her. Tell me, now, was there ever a rarer piece of beauty?"

"The wench is not ill-favored," was her unenthusiastic answer. "So!—but who is she?"

He replied. "She is my daughter. Yonder you see my latter muse for whose dear sake I spin romances. I do not mean that she takes any lively interest in them. That is not to be expected, since she cannot read or write. Ask her about the poet we were discussing, and I very much fear Judith will bluntly inform you she cannot tell a B from a bull's foot. But one must have a muse of some sort or another; and so I write about the world as she sees it. My Judith finds this world an eminently pleasant place. It is full of laughter and kindness—for could Herod be unkind to her?—and it is largely populated by ardent young fellows who are intended chiefly to be twisted about your fingers; and it is illuminated by sunlight whose real purpose is to show how pretty your hair is. And if affairs go badly for awhile, and you have done nothing very wrong—why, of course, Heaven will soon straighten out matters satisfactorily. For nothing that happens to us can possibly be anything except a benefit, because God orders all happenings, and God loves us. There you have Judith's creed; and upon my

word, I believe there is a great deal to be said for it."

"And this is you," she cried—"you who wrote of Troilus and Timon!"

"I lived all that," he replied—"I lived it, and so for a long while I believed in the existence of wickedness. To-day I have lost many illusions, madam, and that ranks among them. I never knew a wicked person. I doubt if anybody ever did. Undoubtedly shortsighted people exist who have floundered into ill-doing; but it proves always to have been on account of either cowardice or folly, and never because of malevolence; and in consequence, their sorry pickle should demand commiseration far more loudly than our blame. In short, I find humanity to be both a weaker and a better-meaning race than I had suspected. And so, I make what you call 'sugar candy dolls,' because I very potently believe that all of us are sweet at heart. Oh no! men lack an innate aptitude for sinning; and at worst, we frenziedly attempt our misdeemeanors just as a sheep retaliates on its pursuers. This much, at least, has Judith taught me."

The woman murmured: "Eh, you are luckier than I. I had a son. He was borne of my anguish, he was fed and tended by me, and he was dependent on me in all things." She said, with a half-sob, "My poet, he was so little and so helpless! Now he is dead."

"My dear, my dear!" he cried, and he took both her hands. "I also had a son. He would have been a man by this."

They stood thus for awhile. And then he smiled.

"I ask your pardon. I had forgotten that you hate to touch my hands. I know—they are too moist and flabby. I always knew that you thought that. Well! Hamlet died. I grieved. That is a trivial thing to

say. But you also have seen your own flesh lying in a coffin so small that even my soft hands could lift it. So you will comprehend. To-day I find that the roughest winds abate with time. Hatred and self-seeking and mischance and, above all, the frailties innate in us—these buffet us for awhile, and we are puzzled, and we demand of God, as Job did, why is this permitted? And then as the hair dwindles, the wit grows."

"Oh, yes, with age we take a slackening hold upon events; we let all happenings go by more lightly; and we even concede the universe not to be under any actual bond to be intelligible. Yes, that is true. But is it gain, my poet? for I had thought it to be loss."

"With age we gain the priceless certainty that sorrow and injustice are ephemeral. *Solvitur ambulando*, my dear—I have attested this merely by living long enough. I, like any other man of my years, have in my day known more or less every grief which the world breeds; and each maddened me in turn, as each was duly salved by time; so that to-day their ravages vex me no more than do the bee-stings I got when I was an urchin. To-day I grant the world to be composed of muck and sunshine intermingled; but, upon the whole, I find the sunshine more pleasant to look at and—greedily, because my time for sightseeing is not very long—I stare at it. And I hold Judith's creed to be the best of all imaginable creeds." He laughed at this season and fell into a lighter tone. "Do I preach like a little conventicle-attending tradesman? Faith, you must remember that when I talk gravely Judith listens as if it were an oracle discoursing. For Judith loves me as the wisest and the best of men. I protest her adoration frightens me.

What if she were to find me out?"

"I loved what was divine in you," the woman answered.

"Oddly enough, that is the perfect truth! And when what was divine in me had burned a sufficiency of incense to your vanity, your vanity's owner drove off in a fine coach and left me to die in a garret. Then Judith came. Then Judith nursed and tended and caressed me—and Judith only in all the world—as once you did that boy you spoke of. Ah, madam, and does not sorrow sometimes lie awake o' nights in the bed of that child? and sometimes walk with you by day and clasp your hand—much as his tiny hand did once, so trustingly, so like the clutching of a vine—and beg you never to love anything save sorrow? And do you wholeheartedly love those other women's boys—who did not die? Yes, I remember. Judith, too, remembered. I was her father, for all that I had forsaken my family to dance insane attendance on a fine Court lady. So Judith came. And Judith did not ask, but gave, what was divine."

"You are unfair," she cried. "Oh, you are cruel, you juggle words. I never hated you till this. Remember that I loved my boy."

He said: "Yes, I am cruel. But you had mirth and beauty once, and I had only love and a vocabulary. Who then more flagrantly abused the gifts God gave? And why should I not be cruel to you, who made a master-poet of me for your recreation? Lord, what a deal of ruined life it takes to make a little art! Yes, yes, I know. Under old oaks lovers will mouth my verses, and the acorns are not yet shaped from which those oaks will spring. My adoration and your perfidy, all that I have suffered, all that I have failed in even, has gone toward the building of an enduring monument. All

these will be immortal, because youth is immortal, and youth delights in demanding explanations of infinity. And only to this end I have suffered and have catalogued the ravings of a perverse disease which has robbed my life of all the normal privileges of life as flame shrivels hair from the arm—that young fools such as I was once might be pleased to murder my rhetoric, and scribblers parody me in their fictions, and school-boys guess at the date of my death!" This he said with more than ordinary animation; and then he shook his head. "There is a leaven," he said—"there is a leaven even in your smuggest and most inconsiderable tradesman."

She answered, with a wistful smile: "I, too, regret my poet. And just now you are more like him—"

"Faith, but he was really a poet—or, at least, at times—?"

"Not marble, nor the gilded monuments of princes shall outlive this powerful rhyme—"

"Dear, dear!" he said, in petulant vexation; "how horribly emotion botches verse. That clash of sibilants is both harsh and ungrammatical. *Shall* should be changed to *will*." And at that the woman sighed.

"Very unfeignedly I regret my poet," she said—"my poet, who was unhappy and unreasonable, because I was not always wise or kind, or even just. And I did not know until to-day how much I loved my poet. Yes, I know now I loved him. I must go now. I would I had not come."

Then, standing face to face, he cried, "Eh, madam, and what if I also have lied to you? Our work is done; what more is there to say?"

"Nothing," she answered—"nothing. Not even for you, who are a master-smith of words to-day and nothing more."



"I?" he replied. "Do you so little emulate a higher example that even for a moment you consider me?"

She did not answer.

When she had gone, the playmaker sat for a long while in meditation; and then smilingly he took up his pen. He was bound for "an uninhabited island" where all disasters ended in a happy climax.

"So, so!" he was declaiming, later on; "*We, too, are kin to dreams and visions; and our little life is gilded by such faint and cloud-wrapped suns—only, that needs a homelier touch. Rather, let us say, *We are such stuff as dreams are made on—* oh, good, good!—Now to pad out the line. . . . In any event, the Bermudas are a seasonable topic. Now here, instead of *thickly-templed India*, suppose we write the *still-vexed Bermoothes*—good, good! It fits in well enough . . ."*

And so in clerkly fashion he set

about the accomplishment of his stint of labor in time for dinner. A competent workman is not disastrously upset by interruption; and, indeed, he found the notion of surprising Judith with an unlooked-for trinket or so to be at first a very efficacious spur to composition.

And presently the strong joy of creating kindled in him, and phrase flowed abreast with thought, and the playmaker wrote fluently and surely to an accompaniment of contented ejaculations. He regretted nothing, he would not now have laid aside his pen to take up a scepter. For surely—he would have said—to live untroubled, and weave beautiful and winsome dreams is the most desirable of human fates. But he did not consciously think of this, because he was midcourse in the evoking of a mimic tempest which, having purged its victims of unkindliness and error, aimed (in the end) only to sink into an amiable calm.

*And so enough of this "little tradesman" and his splendid plagiaries. There was another man—great poet he was named in his own day—of whose body Fortune had made cruel sport and whose mind became, therefore, the abiding place of icy wit and whose heart knew only the nice phrase. Of what human passions he felt none knew, perhaps not even himself; and more man of letters than man, he was considered for the most part. And yet, upon a time, a woman stripped the poet from him, showing him that, loving mightily, he was for the moment but human. Of this we shall read next month in "A Brown Woman."*





# The Thirty Years' Ghost

by Georgia Wood Pangborn

WILL and I had been—yes, I suppose it was quarreling; or at least any one who heard us might easily have thought so. He had finally ridden off in the April rain and I had curled up in the window seat to watch him go, so I was hidden by the curtains when Grandmother and Mother (that is, Will's Grandmother and Mother) came in.

"It won't do," Will's Grandmother was saying, and I could tell by the way her cane hit the floor that she meant it. "I know how you feel, Evelyn. He's your only chick and you're a widow; but—it won't do. They're married, and their house must be their own. Betty's a good child, but she gets more snappy every day, just from idleness; and Will—he's a man, if he is only a boy, and he wants his wife and his house to himself."

I did not wish to listen, but neither did I want them to see my face all swollen with crying. I kept still and put my fingers in my ears. Then I—took them partly out, because Will's Grandmother seemed to be saying strange things.

"Fallen roofs and rotted floors will bring no ache to *their* hearts. And it is property, I suppose; theirs after me, in any event, which will give it a glamor. They can build their nest there to suit themselves and Betty can choose her own wall paper and set out the dining-room with her own wedding china and silver. As to any shadow there—if anything can dispel such a shadow it is youth. Youth! Is any-

thing impossible to youth? Let them go."

Mother-in-law had to go downstairs just then about the laundry, and as soon as her back was turned, though I swear I had not breathed, Grandmother pounced on the curtains with her cane and pushed them aside, looking in at me with exactly the expression of that broken-winged eagle in the Park.

"Well, Mrs. Polonius," said she, "a rat behind the arras? When your fellow rascal comes back, you can pack, the two of you, and go to your own house, if indeed there is one stone left upon another. By the taxes I think there should be."

And she limped away, very rustling and dignified and story-booky; looking more than ever like Queen Elizabeth. For a moment I could not take it in. What house did she mean? Will and I to have a house? But I didn't know enough to run a house. His mother knew how so well, and she would never let me help her. Not that I hadn't offered, until I saw that it only bothered her. And everybody was always saying how fortunate Will and I were to be able to live so grandly without anything to worry us. So many of our friends had had to start on a small scale in a neighborhood not quite so good as they had been used to, but here we were living right on at home, as comfortably as could be. A house—!

Then I remembered. Will had told me,—the family skeleton house. She must mean that! The old

home up the river, where she had quarreled with her husband (Will's grandfather!) when his mother was a little girl. He had left her in a red-headed rage (that's the kind Will gets into) and had gone West and died there. It must have been boarded up, then, for nearly thirty years, though at first, I believe, it had been rented. Was it possible they were going to send us off to an old ruin like that—me, the idle do-nothing who couldn't even broil a steak, to say nothing of showing a servant how? What servants would stay in a place like that, anyhow?

Then I began to think of all my wedding china packed away, and went on to dream how it would look, all spread out by myself, as I used to set out my toy china when I was a little girl—and I went perfectly crazy.

When I came to myself I had Towser by his paws and was waltzing him around on his hind legs in the middle of the rug while he tried to jump instead of doing the proper steps and was nearly barking his head off. Then I tumbled down and he held me there with his great paws on my chest pretending to worry my throat while Grandmother stood in the door calmly regarding us.

"Oh, Grandmother," I said, as well as I could with a hundred and fifty pounds of dog on my lungs, "is the dining-room by any chance in black walnut? And is it a southern exposure—and are there fire-places?"

She nodded her head, "Yes," to all my questions, and went away quickly, but not so quickly that I did not see that her handkerchief was at her eyes. And I tried to push Tow away so that I could run after her, but he thought it was more play and wouldn't let me up, and I was beginning to think he would be a pretty good dog after all in case

of burglars—when Will came in and cuffed him.

"Oh, Will!" I cried, "they're going to send us away because we act so badly! They're going to send us to your grandmother's old house built sixty years ago—a ruin, maybe, with a Ghost! It has twenty rooms and box hedges and I suppose there's a gang of counterfeiters in the cellar and hoboos in the attic. We're chucked out," I said, "like babes in the woods," and I had hysterics on his collar while he tried to tango.

"Bully for Grandma!" he yelled. "Say, we won't do a thing to that proposition!" And he gave me the first decent kiss in a fortnight, and tore away to look up time tables and things while I packed a grip. I think we both felt that after standing there waiting for us for thirty years, it might get tired at the last minute and give us the slip after all. It was a nuisance to feel that we really couldn't start that afternoon in the rain, but we were ready for the eight o'clock train next morning, having had time to pack our trunks and a great hamper of eatables, mostly things that Grandmother had cooked herself.

Grandmother came after us just before the stage came up. Mother was a little poorly and didn't come down the steps. She stood at the top and cried and Will had to pet her terrifically. She would hardly look at me—and I did feel so ashamed!

Grandmother's dear old face was white and quivering as she leaned on her stick with both hands.

"Don't you two," said she, "don't you *dare* to be unkind to each other. Don't dare to be selfish to each other, or to suspect each other of selfishness. For love and remorse—together unavailing—the pain is great, and never dies." She put her hand to her heart as though speaking of

a physical pain. Will looked hard at the horizon and I began to cry.

"Look out for the little end of the wedge," said Grandmother. Then the station hack rattled up and she said nothing more but flourished her stick as we went away. She seemed to be threatening us with a beating in case we didn't mind.

We found the house less of a ruin than we had expected. Of course, we knew it had been looked after in a desultory way by a man from the village, but as we turned in at the gate it struck us both that it looked uncommonly as though it had a tenant. The gate creaked rustily, but we had not expected it to be there at all, and there was a great mass of undergrowth following the fence line inside as well as out, which seemed to have been clipped into the semblance of a hedge. Once inside, moreover, we found narcissus in bloom and a yellow shrub shone like a splash of sunlight against the showery gray of the sky. And there was a vegetable garden, with rhubarb leaves exploding in red and green, beyond which we caught the gray wrinkles of the lake, making ready for the storm that was threatening.

"Fishing!" said Will. He tore his fishing things from our luggage and made straight for the water like a liberated turtle, not even stopping to look at the house, though we had been talking about it all the way.

"Let's get in first!" I called after him. "It's going to rain." But he only tumbled over the bank and out of sight. His head bobbed up long enough to yell, "There's a boat house!" and he threw me the keys. "You go on in. Maybe I'll get a fish for luncheon!"

It was enough to make anybody sulky. I wanted to get in and see the dining-room . . . Fishing! As if we hadn't brought enough cold

stuff to last a week. A whole ham, a lot of canned vegetables and six of Grandmother's best pies. It had cost us the best cook they had had since Will and I were married to have Grandmother go into the kitchen and make those pies!

Besides, what about the counterfeiters and moonshiners and tramps that, as likely as not, were in the house? Did he expect me to enter calmly and face them all alone?

We had brought the hamper with us in the old ark that had met us at the little country station. I sat down upon it with my chin in my hands, feeling very cross, and occupied my mind with running over all the inconsiderate things Will had ever done. I had raked them into a pretty big heap when I happened to look up at the house and found myself wondering from which of those vine-covered windows poor Grandmother had watched her husband going down the path never to return. For, of course, she *had* watched him off, though she would have pretended not to . . . Thirty years ago!

And now he was dead . . . away out West, somewhere. And Grandmother was old . . . and they had never seen each other again after that silly day. And then I stopped thinking of them and got into an idiotic panic about Will. Why was he so still? Could he have tumbled into the lake, or been sandbagged by a counterfeiter? But just then I heard him whistle, and that made me cross again at him for leaving me so long. And then I thought I heard some one in the house!

It was so covered with vines in young leaf, grape, Virginia creeper, honeysuckle, that it was almost a solid block of green. You could make out the shape of the windows and that was about all, but the sound that I heard was like a shade being rolled up. I began to worry in earn-

est, for I was positive that Grandmother knew nothing of any tenant.

In spite of the heavy vines it did not have a deserted look. The roof showed patches of shingles of a lighter gray than the rest, proving that these had been recent repairs. The chimneys were not crumbled. Yet one would hardly have said it was occupied, until I spied a dormer window sticking out of the mass of vines, away at the top where the sun could shine in, and there was a white curtain at the window and the glass looked clean. And—I was sure that at the moment of my looking up a face drew back—that the curtain was just falling into place.

Now I had never heard that gangs of counterfeiters advertised their places of business by clean windows and white window curtains. But *somebody* was saving rent by living in our house!

I went down to the lake, very indignant, to find Will. Somehow he had managed to hook a little fish, perfectly uneatable and about three inches long, and he bragged so over it I could hardly get him to listen to me, but finally when I did get it through his head that there was a tenant to be ejected and that I couldn't wait another minute before deciding about the wall paper and whether we wanted to keep the woodwork as it was or paint the bedrooms white, he nodded carelessly, saying that he *had* rather thought somebody was about, because he had found the boathouse in good repair, and though it was locked he had seen a perfectly good canoe through the window.

"I suppose Grandmother's caretaker is turning an honest penny by renting it, unbeknownst," said he. "But that canoe is the real thing."

"If we'd only asked about the place in the village," I said. "I wanted to, you know, but you were in such a

hurry. If our trunks weren't already on the way out from the station, I'd go right back to the hotel."

"At least," said Will, "let's pay our respects to him. He might be willing to sell us his canoe when he moves out."

"No," said I. "The more I think it over the less I like it. I'm going back to the hotel. I believe it's a tramp."

"I've heard of tramps in empty houses," said Will cocking his eye at the dormer, "but this is the first time I ever knew them to put up white curtains. Or to keep chickens," he added suddenly; and sure enough, just at the corner of the house there was a little peak-roofed affair made of two boards, with slats nailed across, such as you see in old-fashioned pictures, with an old hen fussing inside, and any quantity of little white balls scuttling about in the grass.

"Pshaw!" said Will. "What right have we to break up this combination? Somebody's awfully comfortable here. Maybe honeymooners. Let's just hunt up a good boarding place until we can build a bungalow."

"Oh, all right if you're afraid," said I. "I'm going in. I don't believe anybody that puts up white curtains and keeps chickens can be so very dreadful."

"And a canoe," said Will.

There were boards nailed across the only door that we could see, so we went around to the other side of the house. The door there was not barred up, and was in as good repair as any other door that is opened a dozen times a day. There was even a brass knocker and it was polished. I put my hands over my ears when Will banged it. It seemed—I can't tell how, exactly—as if we were inviting destruction, yet I think I was chiefly embarrassed for the sake of whomever was inside. How



should *I* feel, caught that way in somebody else's house?

I don't know whether Will minded or not, but he seemed so nonchalant and as if there were nothing whatever out of the ordinary in any part of our strange proceeding, that I rather think he was shaking to his boot-soles, just as I was. But he banged the knocker and then turned his back to the door and whistled.

I hardly know what we expected. Anything from a counterfeiter to a college professor. But we surely expected *something*. We waited and waited before knocking again, and at last Will made another racket. Then we thought we heard a sound. It might have been some object falling, jarred down perhaps by our uproar, but it was more like the sound a door makes when you have almost shut it, very carefully, so as not to wake somebody, and then the knob springs back and the latch rattles just as you think you have it safe. . . . Will didn't look at me, but we listened very sharply for a few minutes before he knocked again. But nothing happened and we finally decided that the squatter, whoever he was, had gone and that the place was ours without a struggle.

"I suppose he'll take the canoe for his get-away," muttered Will. Then he turned the door knob and we walked in, for it wasn't locked.

The hall seemed dark at first, but it wasn't musty. There was the smell of old, unused, put-away things that would be better for more sunshine, but it was clean enough and dry. I was sure I smelt coffee.

But it was so still and dim and old-looking! Whoever was living in the house seemed to have little to do with the lower floor, for its cleanliness was like something in a museum glass case. You felt the thirty years. It was the same, I knew, as it had been when Grandmother left it.

Grandmother's portrait in her bridal veil was above the fireplace—every petal of the orange flowers still in place. It was as if there were something sitting there with its head in its hands saying, "What a pity—what a pity!" Not the ghost of anybody in particular; just the ghost of all the happy things that might have happened in those rooms and never had the chance, all because of that old quarrel. The ghost of thirty years—time for a woman to be born and grow up and marry; and I seemed to feel it sitting there like a woman with her face in her hands, lonesome and listening for little children.

"Listen!" said Will. Somewhere in the shadow was the slow ticking of a clock, and as our eyes became accustomed to the dim light we saw it, halfway up the stairs, like Longfellow's clock that said, "Never—Forever—" only this one said, "Thirty years—What a pity! What a pity—thirty years!"—and then it gave a purr and struck twelve.

"I'm awfully hungry," said Will. "I'm going to find where that coffee smell comes from," and he started for the stairs.

I tried to hold him back, for it seemed as if we must be intruding abominably. Probably whoever was there had rented the place in good faith and certainly they had not abused their tenancy. Still, it was *our* house. So I finally let Will go upstairs, but I sat as small as I could in a high-backed chair, trying to assume an inoffensive expression in case our tenant found me there.

Will wasn't afraid, of course. Still, he stepped very softly. I could hear a board creak, now and then, and I was so afraid some one would come out and arrest us or shoot us for burglars before we could explain.

Then I had a terrible fright, for something made a great clatter at

the window, and a gray thing as big as a half-grown kitten flew to the middle of the table. I started to scream for Will, and then I saw it was only the dearest flying squirrel. He was so jolly and businesslike that I thought less about that thirty years' ghost. He sat down beside a big ginger jar that stood in the middle of the table and took a nut out and cracked and ate it. When he had finished it he washed his face all over, keeping an eye on me all the time, then put his thumbs in his vest arm-holes and stared, and just as I was about to ask "Are *you* the one that's making coffee?" he came sailing—biff!—right into my lap, as solid as a baseball. He smelt of my fingers and felt around to see if I had a pocket, and when he found I hadn't flew back to the table and said uncomplimentary things.

"You're somebody's pet," I said. "That's plain." He cocked his ears as though he heard something, and the next moment took a great flying jump to the newel post and ran up the banister as though it had been the limb of a tree. But when he reached the clock he changed his mind and sat on the top of that with his thumbs in his arm-holes again, wrinkling his nose toward the upper floor.

I don't know whether he saw Will or just heard him but he decided that it was another burglar instead of his master and came flying back to the newel post and sat there ordering us away as plainly as he could. Then I heard somebody calling him outdoors—making that squeaking sound with the lips that you do sometimes for dogs; and he was gone so quickly that I couldn't even see where he went.

Pretty soon Will came sneaking down. He came over to me very softly and said, "Let's get out."

He was in such a panic that he

never even waited for me to precede him. We almost jammed in the doorway. But when we were outdoors he showed plainly that it was just embarrassment that ailed him. Being embarrassed is a kind of a scare, but it doesn't mean you're a coward.

"What did you find?" I whispered.

He did not speak for a moment but stood with his hat in his hand, mopping his forehead with his handkerchief, and staring up at the house with an almost comical perplexity.

"Some sort of a scientist," said he.

"Do you mean—counterfeiters?" I gasped. Though we'd talked of such a thing, of course we'd never really taken it seriously.

Will snorted.

"I mean the real thing. The hall up there is lined with preserves. *Not* the kind that Mother makes. Squirring things. Jim-jams. There was a cuttle-fish—"

I screamed.

"A little one, but very twisty."

"But how queer—oh, I know!" I said. "That's just your grandfather's old collection. Why, Will," I said, "don't you remember, it was snakes that they quarreled about? Something about a garter snake in the bathtub and—and then—the experiments with potato bugs, you know. His book on 'Insect Enemies' that she keeps on her table with her Bible—"

"I know," said Will, nodding his head. "Men like to mess and women don't. He must have been a great old boy. I—I'm glad his collection is safe." He looked up at the house with a queer smile. "If that is the explanation."

"Oh, I see!" said I. "This man must be some other scientist who knew about your grandfather's work and has come here to study his collection, and—do you suppose he left valuable manuscript? Something

Grandmother didn't know about—"

"I don't suppose—anything," said Will. "But I found—*this*. I had no right to take it. Didn't know I had, until I was half way down the stairs."

What he showed me was an old newspaper cut of his mother. I had often seen the photograph from which it had been taken—of Will's mother in gown and veil—like the portrait of Grandmother downstairs. It was a cheap and poor cut; yellow with its twenty-five years, and it was in a little gilt frame.

"How awfully queer!" said I. "How he must admire your family, whoever he is. Maybe it's a relative!"

"Maybe it is," said Will.

"Well, then," said I, "what are we to do? Go back home and let him keep our house?"

"He'll keep it all right, I guess," said Will with an odd look. "At least, if he waits for *me* to put him out, he will."

I was so disappointed I was afraid I would cry so I sat down on the hamper and bit my lips.

"I saw a cottage around the bend of the lake," said Will. "You stay here and I'll go along the beach and see if I can raise a telephone."

"If you think I'm going to stay here and wait for your precious tenant to come back and order me off," said I, and I went over the bank with him and sat down on the pebbles trying to put the visions of wall paper and white paint out of my head. But it was hard and as soon as he was fairly gone I began to make a baby of myself, for it is hard being all the time with your "in-laws" no matter how nice they are.

Besides I was getting hungry. What a jolly luncheon we could have had spreading our things on that old table!

A pebble rattled from the bank above me and I looked up to see an

old gentleman in spectacles. Our tenant, evidently, had thought both of us gone, for on seeing me he looked scared as if he were going to run away. Plainly enough, I thought, he *had* intended to run away in the boat, while we, as he supposed, were gone.

"Are you," I said—"Are you the tenant here?"

"Tenant?" said he. "I suppose I am." He hesitated before saying it, as though not quite sure.

And then, all of a sudden I knew what Will wanted of the long distance telephone, and I screamed out "Who *are* you?"

"If it comes to that," said he, sharply, "who *are* you?"

"Mrs. William Hathaway Preston," said I, and he said, "I thought so," but he turned gray and sat down with his head in his hands.

I clambered up the slippery sand. "You're Will's grandfather!" I said. "Why did you say you were dead?"

"I never did," said he, sulkily.

"You didn't say you weren't! And here's Grandmother wearing black for you all these years—"

He gave a queer little grin.

"That so?" said he. "Yes, I suppose she would do the proper thing . . ."

"*Somebody* had to take care of the house," he mumbled. "No use shutting it up. She couldn't expect old Harvey to live forever. He died the year after I came back; that was in 'eighty-nine. So I took on his job—caretaker—no need to tell her the original Harvey had given it up."

Then he lit his pipe, clasped his hands around one knee and looked off at the lake for a long time. I sat so that I could look up at him, and soon he really began to talk.

"So that's my grandson Will—named for me. And you are Grandson Will's wife. Does he, by any chance—does he like to mess around

with things? Does he get in your way?"

His black eyes twinkled at me and his bushy eyebrows wriggled but he didn't laugh. Suddenly he grew very stern, and shook a long bony finger at me.

"Don't you ever—you and your husband," said he, "don't you ever quarrel. Or if you do, have it out and get it over before sundown. For if time once begins to sift into a quarrel-crack between two people, it widens like a little leak in a dam, and first you know the whole river has rushed between you—the river of years. And you can't get back; not ever any more."

"Oh!" I said, "That's almost exactly what Grandmother said!"

"Did she?" said he.

"She keeps your potato bug book beside her Bible," I went on, and at that he blushed like a peony inside his white whiskers and looked down like a shy girl.

I don't know what more he might have said, if the flying squirrel hadn't come—I don't know from where—into his lap, saying every hateful thing it could about Will and me. Then the rain came.

"Let's go and have a bite," he said, and we went up the bank. "If there's one of her pies in that hamper—" he opened it—"I thought I smelt it," said he, and calmly bit right into it, holding it with both hands, like a cooky, as he went ahead of me.

Will overtook us at the door just as the rain whirled over the lake in basketsfull. And he said quite casually, "Grandmother said she'd be up

to-morrow morning. She and Mother will take the night boat."

The matter of thirty years might never have been at all, to look at us.

Grandfather looked down, rubbing his bristly white beard. The pie was half gone.

"Grandmother fell all over herself," said Will in his graceful way.

Grandfather resumed the pie where he had left off while Will and I took out the other things and spread them on the old black walnut table.

"Come," I said, "I want you to show me where the cooking things are. We're awfully hungry."

And Will said, "Gee! What a bully fireplace! I say, Grandfather, mayn't we build a fire and roast some nuts for the squirrel?"

"Oh, yes—fires and young people,"—said he. "And noise. I suppose I'll have to put up with interruptions now."

He finished the pie and sat down before Will's fire with a shy smile, like a child found out in some queer trick, not yet sure whether it is to be punished or laughed at. But you could just hear the old house begin to laugh, as if all that thirty years were nothing but a practical joke.

Once I heard him mutter: "Beside her Bible—hmmm."

And again he cleared his throat and asked in a small, shy voice, "You're sure she didn't mind?"

"Surest thing you know," said Will.

"Ah!" said he, and as if the assurance had given him courage, he went over to the hamper and picked out another pie.

"That's the first good pie I've eaten for thirty years," said he.

# THOMAS TALBOT'S TIME

BY JESSIE E. HENDERSON

THERE were three excellent reasons why Thomas Talbot wanted to catch his train instead of the fleet-footed stranger. The reasons were Jane, Jane's wedding—which was also his own—and Jane's western uncle. There was, however, one excellent reason why Thomas desired a few moments with the man who headed toward the deserted subway stairs. For after the stranger bumped him, Thomas discovered that his watch was gone.

Young clerks are not accustomed to look calmly upon errant gold watches, yet for an instant Thomas felt tempted to let his timepiece disappear. Had not the gold watch been presented to him the night before by his Sabbath School class, had he not in preparation for a trip to New York spent upon a revolver the sum which he might have spent, just this once, on a cab—in short, had the circumstances been entirely different—Thomas might have behaved in an entirely different manner.

While his feet hurried after the stranger, his mind busied itself with a series of melancholy pictures. There stood Jane in bridal white, wondering why Thomas didn't come to be married. There stood Jane's sister, eager to be matron of honor. There stood the uncle from out West who, despite his wealth and his twenty-five years' absence, had decided to be present at the nuptials of his dead sister's child. There stood brother-in-law Fred, impatient to be best man—

And at this moment the miscreant stumbled on the steps. Thomas was upon him almost before he had regained his feet. "Give me that

watch!" Thomas put the revolver against the man's chest.

"What watch?" the other parried.

"Hand it over without any funny business, or I'll blow your head off!" Thomas panted. Strong words, these, for Thomas. The man quailed, held out the watch, and took the steps three at a time. He was a wiry, nimble little fellow.

Thomas jammed the watch into one pocket, the revolver into another, and raced back through the corridor to the station. There he learned that some accident had thrown the regular service out of joint and that his train went from the east loop. Back through the corridor he sped again, darted up the stairs as nimbly as the pickpocket, popped into the east entrance, hurled himself down the steps, and reached the platform in time to wait for ten minutes.

While the clock dragged its hands with no less indolence than if Jane and Thomas got married every evening, he jerked his tie from under his ear, settled his borrowed tall hat more firmly on his blonde head, mopped his cheeks—now pinker than ever—and endeavored to appear at ease in his hired dress suit. It occurred to him to notify the police about his encounter, for Thomas was an earnest, thorough young man and always upon the side of law and order. But this notification would mean more delay. Besides, Thomas reflected as the vengeful sparkle began to fade from his mild brown eyes, perhaps the pickpocket would repent if left to himself. He was glad the wedding would be informal and small, just the Rev. Dr. Hokesby



and uncle and the Sabbath School class and a dozen friends. Still he realized that the wedding was not so informal as to warrant the groom in being absent.

After purgatorial eons, the train came. For an eternity it roared into and out of stations. For yet another eternity the groom-to-be dashed down streets and round corners until he reached Jane's house. From the open door streamed a flood of light rimmed by unbidden onlookers, and in the radiance Thomas saw the anxious best man peer forth.

"Wait," said Thomas solemnly as he sped into the hall, "till I tell you!"

"Tom-Tom!" cried the bride in a tense whisper from some dark recess on the stairs. In defiance of all regulations she drifted down upon him, with a swish of white draperies, through the flowers and ferns. "Whatever kept you so long but uncle's just come so we'd be late anyway and don't you think I look rather nice though I'm awfully afraid this veil will skew but it's probably fastened all right—Susan said she did—and why didn't you get here earlier?"

"When you know what kept me!" Thomas spoke in portentous accents. He kissed the bride's smooth cheek under pretence of arranging the veil. "You know how many snatch thieves there've been in the subway? Well—"

Jane gave a little shriek. Her blue eyes widened. "You don't mean—!"

"Oh, I chased him and got it back," the bridegroom explained airily.

"For mercy's *sake!* Where's uncle?" Jane interrupted. "Tom-Tom, I'll never ride in that subway again as long as I live. Somebody tell uncle to come here *quick.*"

"Had quite a time, of course," Thomas proceeded, not to be sidetracked by uncle or anyone else, "but I finally got it, and here it is."

He pulled out the watch. Simultaneously he clutched the lapel of his hired dress suit to keep himself from falling. It was not his watch! Across his mind flashed the vision of a walnut bureau and a gold watch on the left hand corner, where, as he now remembered perfectly, he had left it.

"Uncle, I want you to meet my—Mr. Talbot," Jane murmured to some one just inside the parlor. Thomas looked between the curtains. Almost without surprise he noticed that uncle was a wiry, nimble little fellow.

Petrified, he hung upon the avuncular approach. At each step he could hear his hopes crushed under foot. There went his dream of a nice job on uncle's ranch, squashed flat. There squirmed Jane's sister's dream of a mortgage paid and a house newly painted. There writhed the varied benevolences which an infuriated uncle would refuse to bestow on a family whose Jane could marry a man that held people up in the subway.

"I'll explain," Thomas mumbled.

"Oh, I've already done that," Jane said archly. Her brows wrinkled. "Uncle's a trifle primitive, a trifle western, but—"

Thomas braced himself. He saw uncle pause for a moment, his profile distorted with rage. He heard uncle's voice. "—— shoved that gun right against my nose. And yelled: 'Gimme that watch, blankety blank you!' "—only uncle filled in the blanks—" 'or I'll blow your blankety blank smash bang head off!' And I says—"

Mr. Talbot, who taught a Sabbath School class, felt his courage recede with the rush of a tidal wave. To admit that he had robbed his bride's uncle, however unintentionally, was bad enough. But granted the admission, a horrid alternative leered on

either hand. He must deny uncle's incandescent version, or tacitly confirm it. Denial meant an unthinkable slur on the vocabulary of uncle, who was wealthy. Confirmation meant the immediate loss of Jane, who was—Jane.

He saw his bride turn pale with dismay at the oaths. He saw the Sunday School class in the background, pale with awe. He saw uncle pale with the thirst for revenge. He felt his own ruddy face pale with apprehension, and he plainly heard the roots of his hair crackle as they turned snow white. Choking, he made an unpremeditated leap toward the family rubber plant, put it between himself and uncle, and plunged into the coat closet.

"Why, Tom-Tom!" Jane expostulated, following.

"For heaven's sake, Jane," Thomas begged, "don't—don't disturb me. I want to think."

"But don't you want to meet uncle?" Jane's whisper turned to a faint wail.

"Can you ask me that?" Thomas demanded over his shoulder.

"Then why—"

"Jane," said Thomas firmly, "you *must not* disturb me now. I've got to hunt for something, and—can't you see I've broken my suspenders?"

Crimson, Jane retired. From his retreat Thomas heard her explain that Mr. Talbot, always so thoughtful, had gone to arrange about the ice cream. The bridegroom craved a few moments for reflection, but the best man pounced upon him, offered a safety pin when Thomas mentioned why he preferred the coat closet to the parlor, and dragged him toward the floral bell in the bay window.

Thomas never could recall how he got through that marriage. Stubbornly he resisted all efforts of the best man to make him turn in the

direction of the doorway from which came the pianoed strains of the nuptial march and the rustle of the bride's approach. He kept his face toward the Rev. Dr. Hokesby in what that gentleman mistook for a rapt contemplation of the sacredness of the occasion, and did not so much as raise his eyes when Jane reached his side. Even for a man who had never before been groom at a wedding, Thomas did a wretched job. He fumbled when the clergyman asked for the ring—nobody knew that he almost offered a revolver instead—and once before the ceremony ended he actually took out the watch and looked at it. Though he kept his back to the parlorful of guests he felt the eyes of a wiry, nimble man bore holes through his coat till his spinal column was no better than a yard of eyelet embroidery.

Less than a hundred invitations had been sent out, and Thomas wondered how it happened that thousands of people filed past and giggled and wished him joy. Uncle lingered at the other side of the room, deep in the fiftieth narration of his loss. Thomas could hear the loss tick in his hired vest pocket, and he put one hand over it to smother the din. "I'm going upstairs to look at the presents," he said swiftly when the reception ended.

"Wait a second," Jane answered, "here comes uncle."

"I'm going to look at the presents," the bridegroom repeated doggedly. A segment of the Sabbath School class impeded uncle's advance. Thomas embraced the opportunity and ascended the stairs almost without touching them. He wandered miserably into the library on the second floor where the gifts were displayed. There was an array of silver on a table, and a resplendent diamond brooch with uncle's card beside the case. Thomas had bent over the

ornament for only a few moments when his nemesis entered the library with Jane. Despite his wife's imperative nods and scowls, Thomas became interested in a silver tea service at the other end of the table. Uncle took a step toward the service, but Jane detained him.

"We are so grateful, uncle dear," she said bashfully, "your gift is so much lovelier than we expect—that is, than we supposed you'd give to a niece you'd never seen."

"Glad you like it, kid," uncle rejoined, his eyes on Thomas and the service, "somehow I felt you'd appreciate real nice silver so I says to myself, 'Well, for once—'" He paused at Jane's look of bewilderment and, following her gaze, saw the card upon the diamond brooch. For an instant he was embarrassed. "So that's what he got, did he? I ordered my ranch foreman to buy it when he was in town, for to tell you the truth, my dear, I hadn't much time for shopping, and I thought I suggested silver. But this is lots better. I'm very glad indeed he got this." Uncle picked up the case and examined the jewel. "Represents a lot of money, but it ain't every day my niece gets married, what? Your sister Daisy's got a nice husband—"

"Susie," Jane corrected, "after mother, you remember."

"Susie, of course—but I always called your mother Daisy. Well, Susie appears to've got a real nice fellow and"—Uncle's glance roved toward Thomas—"I hope you've got another."

"I have," agreed Jane jubilantly, "and there he is now. Oh, uncle, I do want you to get acquainted with Thomas."

"I been wantin' to get acquainted with Thomas," uncle confessed.

There was no escape. The groom's head swam. He extended a

clammy hand which was engulfed at once in uncle's. He tried to think of some scintillation that would divert attention, would turn those little gimlet eyes away from his features. There was a dreadful pause at the end of which uncle remarked: "Ain't I metcher before?"

"No!" groaned Thomas, "I—I've never been West."

"Face's familiar," said uncle in a careless tone. Thomas trembled in sudden relief. Could it be that uncle didn't recognize him? The subway had been poorly lighted—events had occurred so rapidly—uncle seemed more interested in the gifts and the guests than in the groom—

These buds of hope, grown to full flowering, were rudely crumpled half an hour later at the supper table downstairs. And they were crumpled by the hand of his own wife. Jane spoke out in the first conversational lull, eager to spread the story which the groom's disappearance into the coat closet, followed at once by the marriage, had interrupted. "Did you know what happened to Mr. Talbot?" she inquired with awful distinctness. The clink of silverware and the obligato of munching from the Sabbath School class came to a halt.

"G—Got married." Thomas made a wan attempt to avert disaster.

"Worse than that," Jane bubbled, "you needn't pinch me, Tom-Tom. Why shouldn't they know?"

Every one gazed at him. The alien watch clamored within the hired pocket. "Why, yes, I—I—" His voice trailed off. At the table there was dead silence. For the first time uncle permitted himself a long, unhurried look at his new nephew. The Sabbath School class, forks poised, sat expectant. The Rev. Dr. Hokesby beamed from behind the water pitcher. "Yes," Thomas began again, "you see, the trains were

all tied up and I thought I'd never get here. Had to go to the east subway and wait—"

Jane pouted. "Isn't that just like Mr. Talbot? See how cool he is. He *never* will talk about his own perils. Yet he had a dread-ful experience. Just like uncle's."

"Robbed!" gasped every one with a promptness which showed Thomas that any reluctance to talk about one's perils was all on the Talbot side of the family.

"Robbed!" Jane assented, delighted at the effect she had produced, "a man snatched his watch—" the Sabbath School class moaned—"but he chased him and made him give it back."

"Very commendable, very," purred the Rev. Dr. Hokesby, "Brother Talbot would have felt grieved indeed to lose that little remembrance."

Uncle gave Brother Talbot a glance that froze every molecule in every streak of marrow in every bone in Brother Talbot's body. And then, right at the table, uncle uttered in meditative, deliberate accents a word which made the Sabbath School class shiver, though it was not a cold word.

"Dear, dear!" murmured the Rev. Dr. Hokesby, notwithstanding he had been warned that uncle owned a ranch.

But uncle paid no heed to the clergyman or the Sabbath School class. He addressed himself to Thomas, whose hands shook so that he hid them beneath the tablecloth.

"Robbed in the subway, what?" Thomas did not reply, and uncle repeated in a slightly louder tone, "what?"

Thomas moistened his lips, but no sound came from them.

"The north subway?"

Thomas nodded.

"And you chased 'm, pulled your gun on 'm—"

"Oh, no," Jane protested, "Tom—Mr. Talbot hasn't any gun."

Uncle paused for Thomas. Thomas paused for uncle. "Well," said uncle at last, "you've got the watch now, I suppose?"

"Yes—yes, sir," Thomas stuttered.

"Mr. Talbot's Sabbath School class gave it to him as a wedding present," Jane volunteered.

Uncle leaned across the table, a finger pointed at Thomas's pocket. "Let's see it," he commanded.

Thomas went white. He clasped both hands over the pocket. "No! I mean—don't discuss such disagreeable things. Don't make *me* the center of attention. Look at the bride! There isn't one of you that hasn't seen a watch—just an ordinary watch—" the Sabbath School class exchanged offended glances—"but a bride, now! It's not every day you see such a sight. A sight like Jane, I mean—" He stopped. There was a muffled thump upstairs. "I'll go find out what that is," he exclaimed joyfully.

Uncle was at the door before him, Thomas halted so suddenly that the rug on which he stood slid several inches over the floor. "Let *me* go," uncle said with a flash of his little eyes, and disappeared into the hall.

Amid a storm of questions, the bridegroom returned to his place. But the Rev. Dr. Hokesby observed that questions worried him, attributed the worry to modesty, and turned the conversation into other channels. Hot and cold streaks played tag on Thomas's back. What would happen when uncle returned? Had he gone to telephone the police? Luckily the guests were occupied in telling Jane how to cut the wedding cake. Thomas muttered an excuse, left the table without rousing much notice, and stepped into the kitchen. Here a few minutes later Jane's sister found him among the caterer's

assistants and the plates and boxes.

He jumped when she touched his elbow, and then blurted out. "I'm glad you've come, Susan. There's something I've wanted to—to confess all the evening."

"I'm afraid I know what it is," Susan replied coldly, "I suspected it almost from the time you came but I told myself that it couldn't be possible." Thomas winced. "Now, I'll get Jane away as soon as I can. Then I'll make your excuses, and you can steal out the back door to the carriage."

"You'll hide me? You'll help me escape? Oh, dear Susan—"

"Don't be maudlin," Susan snapped, "of course I'll hide you for the present, but it's silly to talk of escape."

Thomas looked agonizing reproach. "Susan, you don't understand. It was a mistake. It was unintentional. I didn't realize—Good gracious, you don't mean that you'll give me up to the police?"

"Certainly not. But, Thomas, if you ever do anything like this again I'll make Jane get a divorce. Remember that."

"Again?" asked Thomas wildly, "is it probable—"

"And now," continued his sister-in-law, "I want you to drink some good, strong, black coffee."

"Do you think," the groom said in a voice of horror, "that I'm *drunk*?"

She had already turned back toward the dining-room. When a caterer's man swung open the door for her, Thomas heard uncle say: "Just a chair fell over—the wind—"

"Susan," implored Thomas at her heels, "I won't allow you to think such abomin—"

His sister-in-law poised on the threshold. "Oh, Thomas, how could you? When we wanted to make such an impression on uncle!" Her eyes were wet.

"Oh, I've made an impression on uncle, all right," Thomas rejoined with a certain recklessness, "but if you think it's because I've been drinking—" He realized that this didn't sound quite as he intended, and he made a final effort. "It's worse than you think. I'm not drunk. I wish I were. I'm the man that took—"

Susan murmured, "Don't forget the coffee—good and black." And closed the door.

Thief, blasphemer, drunkard, the unhappy young man drew the watch from his pocket. It was a handsome timepiece. In curious contrast with the richness of the case was the nickel-plated charm on the fob—a rooster that had an imitation diamond in its beak. As he gazed upon it, uncle entered the kitchen and the watch returned instantly to the bridegroom's vest.

"Mr. Talbot!" uncle growled, "can you tell me what time it is?"

Obeying instinct, Mr. Talbot's hand went into his pocket. Obeying a stronger instinct, it remained there. "Watch's stopped," Thomas chattered, unable for the life of him to give the watch a possessive adjective, "I'll g-go look at the hall clock."

"Never mind," uncle said. Thomas found uncle quite suddenly between himself and the door, and discovered that he was pushed against the wall. He summoned all his fortitude. He opened his lips to confess. But one glance at the face thrust close to his own gave him pause. He who hesitates—and Thomas hesitated. Only for an instant, however. The next, he had snatched a plate of scraps from an astonished waiter, murmured: "Let me help!" wriggled from under uncle's nose and hurried through the back door into the yard.

Evidently it was not uncle's plan to raise a hue and cry. He did not



shout for the police, but followed Thomas, cat-like, into the darkness. Thomas had the advantage, because he knew the topography of Jane's back garden. It was a minute's work to lose his pursuer between the ash barrel and the grape arbor. This done, the bridegroom stumbled to the front veranda, a-quiver in every nerve. He would find Jane, force her to hear his confession and to smell his breath. Then—let come what would. He opened the front door.

Uncle was omnipresent. He had re-entered by the back way and now stood on the doorsill of the dining-room where—to judge by the hilarity—the other guests would loiter for some time. It seemed as though uncle hesitated a few seconds to make sure that none of the guests noticed his absence. Only those few seconds were required for Thomas to steal upstairs. He stood a moment in the upper hall. Uncle peered up the darkened staircase and then seated himself on the lowest step as if to await somebody who might enter by the front door. For the first time that night Thomas smiled.

Smiling, he backed noiselessly across the hall. Smiling, he backed into the library where the presents were displayed. Smiling, he turned so abruptly that his chin scraped the muzzle of the revolver held by a thick-set man.

"Hands up!" whispered the thick-set man. It dawned on bewildered Thomas that the fellow was neither a detective nor a policeman. He obeyed the order with promptness. The fellow looked him over. "Give me y' watch," he commanded.

"Here!" whooped Thomas, also in a whisper. He pulled the watch out in such haste that it ripped the pocket of his hired dress suit. "Here—take it. God bless you!"

The burglar recoiled. "Take that?" he said, pointing at it, "say, quitcher kiddin'."

For several moments Thomas and the burglar stood silent. The only sound was the cheerful tick of the timepiece which the bridegroom held at arm's length. Mechanically he noticed that the intruder had a bag, apparently well filled, and that uncle's diamond brooch and most of the other presents had disappeared from the table. Yet he gave barely a thought to his loss. He was filled with a white-hot indignation which at last found expression.

"Do you mean to tell me," he began in a low, unsteady voice, "that you refuse—*refuse*—to take this watch? I notice that you've taken about all the rest of the family plate. What's your objection to this? Isn't it good enough for you? Isn't it?" the phrase "compounding a felony" drifted about in his brain, but it ran against "five years for highway robbery" and exploded.

Visibly perplexed, the burglar rubbed his nose with the butt of the revolver. When he spoke it was in a tone of mingled conciliation and suspicion. "Oh, it's a good watch all right. It's a nice watch. But when I first seen it I supposed of course you was one of us."

"Of course," Thomas repeated stupidly.

The man's face lighted, but uneasiness gloomed down on it again. He touched the rooster charm with his revolver. "Where'd you get it?"

Thomas felt weary of deception. "From the man that owns it," he replied.

Across the burglar's visage went a flash of comprehension. "Why 'n' cha say so right off? Now, you put me wise what to do, and I'll do it. Of course, if he give it to you—"

"Nothing of the sort," retorted truthful Thomas, "I stole it."

One long look that expressed all the shades of emotion from utter unbelief through amazement to full credence and so on to wild mirth—one such look the burglar gave Thomas Talbot. Then he leaned upon the denuded table and doubled up with silent laughter. Once in a while he stopped to look again at Thomas and immediately went off into another spasm so violent and yet so noiseless that to Thomas it seemed as if the man must yell or burst. "I stole it," he says, the man spluttered over and over, tears coursing down his grizzled cheeks, "he stole it! *Stole—*" And more peals of whispered merriment.

Thomas felt annoyed. He could hear the guests in the dining-room and he knew that Jane would soon come upstairs to change her dress. If the burglar intended to take the watch, he must do it now. Some such idea appeared to enter the burglar's brain. "Come on, you shrimp!" he said, jerking his head toward the window, "we can talk it over outside."

Had it not been for the revolver in the fellow's hand, Thomas might have declined the invitation. But there was the revolver, there was the window, and there—had he tried to make any outcry—was uncle seated on the stairs. Thomas crept to the window. A porch roof glimmered beneath and thence it seemed an easy drop to the thick grass. Thomas returned the watch to his pocket again and slipped out. The burglar followed.

As dexterously as if second story work had been his profession since long before he began to clerk or to teach Sunday School, Thomas Talbot clambered among the vines on the porch roof. He slid down the waterspout, hung for an instant attempting to measure the distance in the dark, and dropped. He landed

in uncle's arms, landed with an impact that wrung a grunt from uncle and bore them both to the ground.

"Excuse me!" Thomas tried to roll off uncle. "I assure you, I didn't mean—"

"No doubt!" uncle rejoined in muffled tones, "but when I get up—"

"Uncle!" said Thomas, "this is no time for petty animosities. There's a burglar in the house. He's on the waterspout now."

"Gimme that watch," replied uncle.

"Certainly, certainly," Thomas agreed. He pulled it from his vest and at the same time pulled uncle to his feet. "But for heaven's sake, don't tell Jane. If I'd known it was yours, you know—if I'd known who you were, you know—"

"That's it." The burglar dropped into the conversation from the spout. "If the little shrimp'd guessed!"

"If I'd had my gun in the subway with me," said uncle, "I'd of had him guessin', all right. You're a whale of a bridegroom, you are. And he teaches Sunday School!"

"Upon my soul," began Thomas solemnly, "upon my honor, I swear—"

"It's a wonder you didn't pinch the wedding ring," continued uncle in subdued tones, "and how you let the wedding presents get by, you blinkety biff son of two dashes, three hyphens and an exclamation point—"

Thomas danced with impatience. "That's just it! He's got 'em. He's got 'em, I tell you, in that bag!"

Uncle slapped the burglar on the back. "What! You got 'em when this—" indicating Thomas—"was on the job?"

"Look here," Thomas pleaded, "if you knew how awfully I feel about the watch—"

"That's all right," said uncle, and consigned the watch to a region where its works would inevitably

melt. "What do I care about the watch, you clever little smash gosh, you? I was only foolin'. You done the slickest job I've lamped in a long while. Any time you wanna friend, look me up." He extended a hand toward Thomas. "Shake!"

Thomas stood dazed. "But you're not a thief," he stammered miserably.

"I ain't?" uncle said, not without resentment, "who says so?"

Thomas backed away from him. "Perhaps this isn't your watch at all?" he suggested.

"The fob's mine, though," uncle answered, "I wouldn't wanna lose it. Whenever I send one of my helpers to do a job I give him this rooster—it saves writin' letters—and then the other boys all know they're to take his orders. I guess that's a rotten idea, what?" He spoke in professional pride. "You've heard of Fendy's gang, I guess? That's the famous Fendy rooster."

"We—ell!" murmured Thomas. What would Jane think?

Came the whir of an automobile at the front gate. Came a sudden hush in the house, followed by a faint scream and the rush of many feet. The sound awakened Thomas. "Don't you dare take my wedding presents!" he cried, and whipped out the forgotten revolver. "Hold up your hands! Hold 'em up, I say, or—or I'll blow your head off!"

Up went the confederate's hands. Up went uncle's hands also. "Blank blank!" roared uncle, "for a blankety double-crossed—"

Round the corner of the house swept a whirlwind which resolved itself into a stout man who shouted, with a Western twang, "I heard his voice!" After the stout man came half a dozen policemen. After them at a discreet distance came the best man and Susan and the Sabbath School class. After the Sabbath

School class—some time after—came the Rev. Dr. Hokesby and several of the guests. The officers fell upon the confederate and upon uncle. Thomas saw the confederate's gun wrested from his grasp and heard him volunteer the information that it wasn't loaded. As in a dream, Thomas stood with his own gun pointed at the spot where uncle and his pal were being handcuffed. Behind him some one threw open the blinds and let a gush of light from the house into the yard. It fell full on Thomas and his revolver.

A white figure with a nebulous white veil darted toward him. "Tom-Tom!" it shrieked, "oh, Tom-Tom, are you hurt? Oh, how did you ever do it?"

"I—don't—know," replied Thomas.

"Oh, how dreadful," Jane moaned, "but of course when we've had no photographs of him for twenty-five years, how did *we* know? And we'd never have found it out till too late if uncle—*real* uncle—hadn't come just when he did. And you, Tom-Tom—holding them at bay!"

"Never again!" the stout man with the Western twang boomed to the officers, "it'll teach me not to tell my business to strangers in the smoking-car. Pushed me off the train at a forsaken water tank 'way out on the prairie—thought he'd get a rich haul in presents, I suppose."

The stout man whom Jane now addressed as "uncle" interrupted himself suddenly. "Where's that diamond brooch?" he roared, "where's my watch?"

He spoke in the direction of the captured burglars, but Thomas started nervously and opened his clenched left hand. "Could this—"

"It could," said the stout man.

"Why—ee, Thomas!" exclaimed Jane, "how did *you* happen to have Uncle's watch?"



# Black Lily

*by* Achmed Abdullah

AT first we were amused at Hattie's remark, and then frankly embarrassed. Of course, it served Joe Acheson right. Still, we were very grateful when Johnny Fresne smoothed things over a bit by springing that yarn of his.

Joe Acheson never could carry his liquor like a gentleman. He was born and bred in the slums of Belfast; and all the millions he had dug out of the Kootenay and the Coeur d'Alene could not change the nature of the beast. That remark of his was, of course, aimed directly at Johnny:

"I never had any use for a fellow who uses perfumes—darned effeminate, I call it."

You should have seen Hattie Clarke blaze up. All the world knew that she had been in love with Johnny ever since he drifted from Victoria across the Sound into Seattle.

"Well, Mister Joseph Acheson, do you really think that a man, to be a man, must necessarily smell of tobacco and perspiration?"

Only she didn't use that last word. You see, she had been to finishing school in the East after her dad struck oil on his ranch. But she wanted to get beneath Joe's skin, and Joe's abridged Webster contained no such elegant Norman diction as "perspiration." So Hattie gave him the plain, unvarnished Anglo-Saxon.

It was then that Johnny broke in

and saved the situation. He looked at Hattie, then he looked at Joe (two entirely different sorts of looks); and then he looked at the whole table.

Two minutes later we were listening to his yarn. There was no beginning to it. No explanation. He just told us. And he just naturally held us.

Before we knew it, he had us dead away from the rain and the pine trees of the Northwest, and we were floundering about in an atmosphere which was part West Africa and part Berlin. He spoke of both places as if they were as familiar to him as his pocket.

We never knew, we never asked what were his exact relations with that West African slave dealer of whom he told the tale. We never knew what sort of a string he, himself, had on him. Nobody ever asked Johnny any questions, you see. He was just Johnny, and he was good enough for Seattle: of uncertain nationality, but with a fine house, down in Queen Anne's Addition, a cellar full of château wines, a Rolls-Royce, a library which he read, and a fifteen-carat education and breeding and all-round knowledge.

Also, Hattie was in love with him. That in itself was a good-enough recommendation for our crowd.

YES, yes, perfumes. Scents. I know some people don't like

them. Now, that does remind me.

When old Durand decided, on the spur of the moment, to leave West Africa and make tracks for Europe, I had to go with him, of course. As long as I stuck close to his coat tails, he meant money in my pocket. No, no, no. Not blackmail. But there was a certain debt of gratitude unpaid between him and me, and so I thought I had better keep in sight of both debt and debtor. Durand was one of those chaps who have to be reminded of their obligations every once in a while.

I didn't like the idea of leaving. Durand's house was no end comfy. His black servants were models of devotion and faithfulness and competence. Why, I never knew. For the old man used to *sjambok* them for the slightest offence or mistake. Well, that may have been the very reason, now I come to think of it. Yes, I hated to leave his house, the finest house in Freetown, the finest on the whole blessed West Coast, from Morocco clear down to Wal-fish Bay. And drinks? My word—that chap could take rum and dry champagne and English orange bit-ters and a few other ingredients, and make a drowned man thirsty with the smell of it.

All right then. We took an old Woermann tramp out of Freetown. Durand had an idea Berlin would be the right place for him. He had helped the Germans that time when they made their last periodical attempt to paint that charming nigger republic of Liberia black-white-red. And so he knew a few things which put the Wilhelm-Strasse on their good behavior.

But he was scared just the same, dead scared. Served him right. Slave trading is all right in its place, I fancy. But it was rather a dirty, low-down trick to make a raid into the villages of the very Galla tribe

who had considered and treated and worshiped him as their own, special, no-end-wise-and-benevolent White Chief. Even then he could have got away with it, if he had had sense enough to divide profits with the medicine man. But Durand was a whole-hogger.

And the result was that every evil-smelling, oil-smearing Galla, from Stanley Pool clear down to the Coast, was on his trail, with the cheerful intention of catching their former, no-end-wise-and-benevolent White Chief and roasting him to a turn over a slow fire. A very slow fire, my friends.

But the greatest mistake he had made, as I mentioned, was that he had refused to divvy up with the medicine men.

Those gentry turned on him. Declared him bad *ju-ju*, which is as sure a way of killing a white man on the West Coast, as swinging him from a manila rope over a precipice. The rope may bear the strain, the weight, for a day, an hour, or a week . . . a year even . . . but in the end it's bound to give way. And then, there is a mess.

So behold us, leaning over the railing of that black Woermann tramp, drinking in the last whiff of the shore wind, the African shore wind. It wasn't a bad sort of smell; a little moist, it is true, a little jungly and feverish, and a little acrid. But not bad at all. I remarked upon it to the old man. I said that you could blind-fold me and transport me via the Magic Carpet route to any city I'd ever been in, and I would locate myself by the smell of it.

"It's unmistakable, Durand," I said. "Now, there's New York: sewer pipes and sun-melted asphalt and freshly-laundered shirtwaists. London is all rain and mutton-grease and stale ale, with a dash of gin. Paris a mingling of . . ."



He interrupted me with a laugh. "The philosophy of odors, eh?" He drew a huge bandana from his pocket, and there was a heavy, overpowering perfume coming from it. "Myself, I adore scents; rich, sweet scents."

It was so. I had never ceased to wonder why this strong, male mass of a man, who had spent three-fourths of his life in acrid, stinking Africa, huddled close against the breast of rank, brutal Nature, should have this almost feminine love of heavy scents. But it surrounded him like a halo. He never changed the brand. He used a peculiar Black Lily odor made by Rallet in Moscow; and I have seen it on his dressing-table in all possible shapes and forms: as perfume, lotion, *extrait végétal*, talc powder, and what-not.

I spoke of it.

"Oh, yes," he replied. "It's as much a part of myself as this disgusting, rolling double chin of mine." He looked at me with a sharp, meaning stare. "If ever you miss me, Johnny, follow the trail of my perfume. *And if the perfume is not there, remember, my friend, that I myself cannot have been there either.*"

There was such a heavy, cutting expression in his accents that it disturbed me. I asked him to be more explicit.

But he only laughed.

"It is nothing, my friend. I only ask you to remember that this Black Lily perfume is as much part of myself as this broad, thick-lipped, horrible mouth, these leering eyes. . . . I am not beautiful, eh?"

He laughed again; then he turned to other matters. Nor did he speak of it again during the whole journey.

Well, we got to Berlin. He called on the Wilhelm-Strasse, and I do not think they were very glad to see

him. But old Durand knew a few things. So when he asked them to do a little something for him, they were so pleased at the modesty of his demand, that they agreed to it right then and there.

This is what he asked them:

"If anything happens to me in Berlin, I want you to publish the facts in every newspaper. My friend, Fresne, here, will give you the details. If I should be murdered, if there should be every indication of my being murdered, don't trouble about investigating too much. And if my poor, fat, murdered old body should be missing, don't bother about that either. Just pass the good word along to your Police Department."

We left the Wilhelm-Strasse, and drove back to our hotel. We had put up at the Eden, on the Kurfürstendamm, across from the Zoo.

I had opposed the idea of our staying there. I had reminded him of the threats of the Galla medicine men. I had tried to persuade him that the safest place for him would be a small *pension* in the West End, one of those select affairs kept by a major's widow, which does not flare the names and pedigrees of its distinguished visitors as advertising matter in the dailies.

But Durand had only laughed.

"My dear Johnny, you don't know the West Coast as I know it. Nor do you know the Gallas as I know them. A Galla, for sake of revenge, will climb a minaret with his bare feet, and track the mists of dawn to their home. There are no odds for my safety between the biggest hotel in Europe and the meanest, obscurest Bloomsbury lodging-house."

So we had, as I said, put up at the Eden, and the newspapers duly heralded the arrival and the daily doings of the great West African.

It was a ripping drive back from the Wilhelm-Strasse. As soon as we

reached Berlin, he had bought the best motor-car to be had for money, and the chauffeur was a wonder.

At the turning of the Leipziger-Strasse our car slowed, then stopped.

A funeral procession was coming from the opposite direction. It seemed a rotten bad omen. Durand had left the Coast to get away from death as conceived and interpreted by the merciless brains of a Galla ju-juist. I didn't feel a bit like losing him. He was worth pounds, shillings, and pence to me. And so—just to encourage myself—I turned to him with a jesting word. But it froze on my lips when I looked at him. He also was watching the sable cortège of grief. But not in sympathy. An inward, spectral, nameless *repulsion* was mirrored in his eyes. He was shivering. His face was ashen-gray; and he held on to his seat with nervous, quivering hands.

His words, when he spoke, seemed irrelevant. They were so wholly personal, self-searching; and he was a man who always made a point of clothing his feelings in a cloak of inscrutability. Afterwards I understood.

He spoke in a trembling, veiled voice.

"I am afraid of death. Death is to me something concrete, tangible. Perhaps because I have no belief in a future state." Suddenly he turned to the driver with a snarl which showed his stumpy, yellow teeth. "Drive on. Drive on. What . . . funeral procession? . . . To hell with it. Drive on, you cursed, maudlin fool!" Our car whirled softly on its way. Durand gave a gasp of relief. Then he continued. "To me life is a plain, business-like compact with existence. Death is the breaking of the compact. It holds unknown, bleak agonies. It is pregnant with sinister possibilities. I will not

be crushed into a coffin, Johnny. I will not be huddled underground. I will not be choked into the stinking, sodden, wormy, mildewy earth. Death? . . . no, no, no . . . it's a disruption of continuity . . . it's . . . ."

Suddenly he regained his self-possession. He looked at me with a little shamed, apologetic smile. The terror vanished from his eyes like the breath from the face of a looking-glass.

It was like watching a black, threatening sky; and all at once there is a yellow-bursting flame of sun. I was relieved when I saw the snowy pile of our hotel standing out of the distance. A stiff drink, a quiet talk . . . and then we could map out a plan of campaign how best to checkmate those Galla murderers . . .

Then the car stopped again. A traffic policeman held up his hand to give the city-bound rush a chance to wheel on for a few blocks.

I was about to light a cigarette when a clutching claw shook the match from my hand. Durand was gripping my arm. He made several attempts to speak. His face turned purple. When finally he mastered his voice, it came with the rhythmic stamp of a piston-rod.

"Look . . . look . . . Merciful Madonna . . ."

I was impatient.

"For heaven's sake, man, what's wrong with you?"

He pointed into the crowd with a shaking finger.

"Look . . . there . . . next to the girl in red . . . the negro . . . it is a Galla . . . it is *M'pwa*, the medicine man . . ."

He sank back in his seat, shielding his face with his hand. But he was not quick enough. The negro had seen him. And there was an expression in his eyes which I shall remember to my dying day.

I could not keep my eyes off the black. I knew that, caught in the crush at the curbstone, he would not attempt murder right there and then. But I stared at him, evilly fascinated.

I am not a superstitious man. Nor am I fantastically-minded. But when I saw the black, I . . . oh, it's hard to explain . . . but the Galla seemed to be a thing apart. That's it. *He was a thing absolutely apart.* All the people around him, Germans, strangers to me, foreigners in speech, thought, ideal, aspiration, humor. Yet, when I looked at the Galla, I felt myself and all the others, the foreigners, massed into a certain sharp, comprehensive unity. It was not because he was a negro. I am used to them. I have lived in Africa, in the Southern States, in Jamaica.

The men and women, even the little children, tolerant because of their tender, unthinking years, looked at the black and stared. Not with curiosity—a negro is no longer that in Europe—but with subconscious terror and loathing. He was to them—they felt it, knew it—a strange, unclear thing, not wholly human, not wholly animal. His massive, crunching jaws, his blazing, yellow-white eyes, his plum-colored, shiny skin, with the scaly, purple spots on the sharp cheekbones, his swinging, apish arms—a West Coast negro! But they had never seen one before. They knew nothing of the horrible brutalities, the ghastly, sensual cruelty which has made his race an offal, a stench in the nostrils of clean folk. If I had harangued them and told them that this man was a Galla from the West Coast hinterland, they would not have understood. *Galla?* The word meant nothing to them.

They only felt that here was a monstrous, dim, terrifying *thing*. It should not exist . . . crush it un-

der foot, stamp your heels into its face . . . and then hurry home, to the clean, clean fireside, and change your shoes and wash your hands—and forget.

The whole impression didn't last more than thirty seconds.

But in that fleeting space of time I understood better than ever before why Durand had made such a quick get-away from Freetown.

When, finally, the traffic policeman raised his hand again and our car went on its way Durand lifted his hands from his face. He had regained his self-possession at once. There was a smile on his lips, as joyful as the dawning of day after night. I marveled at it; this sudden recuperation and lifting out of the depths of fear. It was perhaps the man's chief characteristic, and, as such, responsible for his colossal success. This sudden strength of his always popped out amain when you thought him crushed and beaten. It was both his weapon and his stanchion.

The evening was uneventful. Of course, it was clear that the ju-ju men had found out immediately about his departure, had trailed him, and had sent one of their number after him, doubtless by a fast mail packet.

It was on the following day that the strange event occurred which looked so abstruse at first, and afterwards so simple, so diabolically clever.

A survey of the suite we occupied at the Eden will serve to bring into relief certain aspects of the strange enigma which was shortly to face me.

The apartment extended over the entire left wing of the second floor. It was very secure from intrusion, since it could only be reached by a long corridor which connected it with the main landing. At the crossing of the main landing and the corridor were the floor clerk's desk and

chair. These were set against the wall, at such an angle that they commanded both staircases, the elevator, the landing, and the length of the corridor which branched off to our suite. The floor clerks worked in shifts, day and night. Nobody could come or go, by elevator or stair, without coming under their notice. And they gave me the impression of being extremely sharp and observing young men.

From the corridor a door opened into our first room, our sitting-room. There were two windows and a balcony giving on the street, and, at the other end, two broad French windows opening on a paved courtyard. This courtyard, nicely laid out in the Spanish style with potted palms, a motley mass of flowers, and a tinkling fountain, was used as an open-air restaurant. Two folding-doors opened from the front room: the left to my suite of bedroom, bathroom, and dressing-room; the right to Durand's. Beyond the latter's was a charming little private dining-room with a small lift which connected directly with the kitchen. There were windows in all these rooms, giving either on street or courtyard. But the main point was this: that anybody wishing to enter Durand's or my suite, or the private dining-room, had to pass from the main landing, up the branch corridor, and through our front room.

It was really a very safe place. For the street on which our windows opened was the Kurfürstendamm; the main thoroughfare of the West End, lined on both sides with cafés, restaurants, and shops of all sorts; and crowded with people day and night. And the courtyard, thanks to the warm and early spring, was already in use as an open-air restaurant. Not only that. It also did a rushing trade as a café until that shockingly late hour which the Ber-

liner considers the proper moment for turning in; and as soon as the last guest had departed—seldom before three in the morning—a brigade of felt-slipped scrubwomen took charge of it to prepare it for the breakfast hour.

Late in the afternoon, I entered Durand's suite for a bit of talk. The first thing that struck me was again that heavy odor of Black Lily perfume which floated about him like a halo. It was stronger than ever, and I found it very disagreeable. Too pronounced. Too sickly. More objectionable than musk or patchouli.

Durand was in excellent humor; of an elephantine kiddishness. And that was the more surprising as, at intervals during the day, the Galla medicine man, accompanied by another negro (obviously a German-speaking black; for I saw him give orders to the waiter) had visited the courtyard café, and was frequently looking up at our rooms. It was evident that he had located his quarry, and that he was now evolving some devilish campaign of murder.

I spoke of it to Durand. I suggested that he might go once more to the Wilhelm-Strasse, and have the black arrested and deported.

He laughed.

"No, no. What would be the use? Another one would come out of Africa and finish the job. And if he failed, another, and still another. I rather imagine that I am doomed." He laughed again. "But perhaps this perfume of mine which you despise so much, may tide me over for a little while."

This eternal, mysterious allusion to his sickening perfume got on my nerves. Also his silly laugh, and his braggadocio about his being doomed.

Yet his laugh did not sound like an affectation, or Dutch courage. Something seemed to amuse him. And he would not tell me.

He simply refused to discuss it. He would not answer my questions by so much as a single word. When finally I insisted, impatient, angry, a look came into his sardonic eyes which scared me.

He stared at me for several long, embarrassing seconds, a thin, sneering grin sagging in the corners of his heavy lips. Then he walked over to the *escritoire* and wrote rapidly. He gave a short laugh, and handed me what he had written.

I read:

"You only believe what you are able to absorb into your stupid, clogged pores with the help of your five senses. Therefore you will think me either a madman or a liar. Still, I know the West Coast hinterland, and you do not.

"I tell you that I do not dare to open my mouth. Why? I shall tell you: because the medicine men of the Galla tribes have a sixth sense, closely akin to a sharp sense of hearing, but with a telepathic kink attached to it which enables them to hear even the faintest whisper as long as they are within reasonable distance of the speaker.

"That Galla down there in the courtward is not watching. He is *listening*. Now stop your fool questions, and let me do things my own way."

"Tear it up," he said when I had finished. I obeyed. "Now let's put on our duds, and go for a drive."

We had a ripping spin down the Döberitzer Landstrasse, as far as the race track. We watched two or three races. Suddenly Durand rose. He said he had forgotten something very important at the hotel.

No, no, he would rather go himself. He would have the chauffeur burn the gas both ways. It would only take him a minute at the hotel. He would be back in no time. I should wait.

I did wait.

I waited for two hours, perhaps longer. The races were over long ago. I was the only man left in the grandstand. The attendants finally begged me to move on. Sorry to disturb me; but the place had to be cleaned.

I walked slowly up the Döberitzer Landstrasse for a distance, watching hard for Durand's big, sulphurous-blue touring-car. But it did not come. I was getting nervous.

Had there been an accident? Had he perhaps run abeam of that Galla medicine man, and been murdered?

The last thought decided me. I jumped into a passing taxi, and told the driver to make full speed for the Eden.

Durand's car was not in front of the hotel.

I hurried upstairs. I had ugly forebodings . . . a shadowing forth, in visual form, as it were, of thoughts my mind was afraid to formulate.

Running past the floor clerk, I fired a quick question at him.

"Has my friend returned?"

"Yes, sir. But he left again—over half an hour ago."

So he had been in his room for something like an hour. He had told me he would stay only a few minutes. He had had time and to spare to return to the race track.

I rushed up the long corridor. I opened the door, and looked into the front room. Then I stumbled in a half-faint. My bones seemed to give way under me, like lumps of cotton. A thousand seas roared in my ears; the bloated, orange suns of a thousand worlds swung madly before my eyes . . .

I gave an inarticulate, choked cry.

The floor clerk came running.

"*Du lieber Herr Gott! Was ist denn los?*"

His English failed him in the ex-



citement of the moment. He supported me. He dragged me across the threshold. Then he, too, cried out.

"Murder . . . murder . . . oh, my God . . ."

The room was in frightful disorder. Two chairs were overturned. The cloth was dragged from the center table. Somebody had clawed desperately at the heavy velvet window curtains, bringing part of them down in a ragged mess. There were fresh, sticky blood splotches on wall and carpet. There had been a struggle, a bitter, life-and-death struggle.

The door to Durand's bedroom yawned wide-open, like an evil, sneering, bestial maw. We hesitated at the threshold. Then the clerk, with that icy courage which is so much akin to deadly fear, walked in. The next moment, he staggered back with a shriek, terrified, shivering . . . pointing at the white panel of the door which connected with the dining-room.

I looked, following the direction of his shaking finger.

My breath came like a bellows. A chokepear seemed to clog my throat. My tongue grated against my teeth. Violent perspiration beaded my forehead.

On the door—stark, ugly, sharp-lined, accusing—was the tell-tale imprint of a bloody hand!

I don't know how long it took me to regain self-possession. But suddenly I heard my own voice, as if coming across hazy distances. I instructed the clerk to let nobody into the apartment, not even the manager; but to telephone immediately to police headquarters.

The clerk left on a run.

I looked about me.

The bed was in terrible disorder. Blood was all over it. The sheets and pillows had been slashed to ribbons with a knife.

Durand must have lain down for a moment. Then the assassin had come in, I thought, had hacked him with a dagger.

Yes, here was a ragged piece of the brown silk pyjamas which Durand affected. There was a torn lock of his scanty, gray hair.

But where was the corpse? Had the dying man dragged himself into the front room to escape his fate? It was evident from the disorder. But there was no trace of him there, either. He must have dragged himself back again. Or, perhaps, he had tried to rush out into the corridor. The murderer had struggled with him, to tear him away, back to the bedroom to finish him. There was the torn table cloth, the curtains half pulled down. The murdered man had held on to them with the strength of despair.

But he had not been strong enough. He had been dragged back . . . where? . . . into the dining-room, of course. There was the bloody imprint on the white panel of the door, like a ghostly, accusing sign-post.

I half turned the door knob . . . cautiously, so very, very cautiously . . . Good Lord, what would I find? Suppose the assassin were still inside?

But no. That was impossible. The clerk must have seen him come and go.

Suddenly I straightened out. A thought came to me. Why . . . the clerk had told me that Durand had left the hotel again half an hour ago. And suppose—though it was impossible—that both Durand and the murderer had entered the apartment without the clerk's knowledge, how was it that he had heard nothing? People do not struggle *silently* for life and death.

What devil's business was all this?

I opened the dining-room door. I

walked inside. The room was in perfect order. Nobody had been there. Then I carefully investigated all the other rooms, including my own suite. There was no trace of murderer or murdered. Just the few telltale signs—the blood, the imprint of the hand, the disorder, the piece of torn brown silk, the ragged lock of gray hair.

If murder had happened, the assassin had come into the room by a way other than the main landing; and by the same way he had departed, carrying the corpse. And Durand was a huge, heavy, shapeless mass of fat, weighing easily two hundred and fifty pounds. By street? By courtyard? Impossible. That would presuppose the strength and the agility of a gorilla. And the street was full of people; the café in the courtyard had been crowded since before lunch time.

When, a few moments later, the police inspector came, he went rapidly and thoroughly over the apartment. The man knew his business. I asked him the same questions I had asked myself.

"Yes, yes," he replied. "All very mysterious. Murders often are. But murder there has been. There is every indication. Now the clerk says that he has not seen Durand return here after he left for the second time, over half an hour ago. Nor has he seen anybody enter the suite. Very well. The only solution is that the clerk is either the murderer or an accomplice."

I tried to argue with him. I had no reason to consider the clerk innocent. But, on the other hand, I could not think him guilty. He had not acted like a guilty man when he went through the rooms with me. Still, I guess the inspector did exactly what any other policeman would have done under the same circumstances.

He went off with the tearful, protesting clerk, asking me to see that nobody disturbed the room. There might be some clue, some valuable clue which he had overlooked. He would be back within the hour with two of his most trusted detectives.

When he had gone, I went to my own suite. But I did not stay there very long. For, casually stepping to the window, I saw the Galla medicine man at his usual post of observation, in the courtyard, looking up at our rooms.

I telephoned to the office, and asked them to send me up the headwaiter.

"Yes," he said in answer to my question. "The negro has been there ever since noon. Is he annoying you, sir?"

"No, no. I just asked out of idle curiosity."

"Very well, sir. Thank you, sir."

He bowed and left.

Had the floor clerk, then, really acted under the Galla's instructions, since it was clear that the Galla himself could not have committed the murder? I could not believe it. There was something about this whole affair which had escaped me so far, a vital spot, a solution, which whisked and wound itself through the mazes of this stark enigma like a thin, half-visible wire.

I returned to Durand's bedroom. I tried to reconstruct the scene. He had returned to the hotel after leaving the races. He had felt fatigued and had lain down for a moment. There was the disordered bed as a witness.

I bent over it.

There was something about the bed which I did not like.

The pillows were rumpled. The sheet and cover were slashed. There was blood. All true enough.

But why did the knife cuts run from left to right, across the width

of the bed, while the trail of blood extended the other way, from head to foot? It was reasonable to assume that, as wounds naturally follow the general direction of the knife thrusts which cause them, the drip of blood would run the same way. Also the blood spots centered in the middle of the bed, indicating injuries in the abdominal region. There was so much blood and so many knife slashes in that part of the bed that the murdered man, chiefly considering that he was fat and asthmatic, could not have had the giant strength and vitality to drag himself out of bed, and into the front room. He must have been practically disemboweled.

I looked more closely at the pillows. They were rumpled, as I said. But when I lifted them up, I noticed that the sheet which stretched beneath them to the head of the bed, was perfectly straight and smooth. There were none of those wrinkles and creases and folds which the weight of a moving head on top of the pillows would naturally cause; even with a quiet sleeper, which Durand was not.

Another peculiar feature was that both sheet and cover were tightly stretched at the place where the sleeper's legs must have been. Even if he had rested on top of the bed, Durand's weight was such that the cover, tucked in at the foot, must have given way, or at least bulged in spots.

Closer and closer I bent over the bed. And suddenly it struck me that there wasn't the slightest suspicion of the Black Lily scent about it. True: the maid changed the bed linen every morning. But Durand was so saturated with the beastly stuff that even a ten minutes' rest would have left a vague trace of the odor on the pillows. But there was none. Absolutely none.

Then his words of the day before came back to me:

*"If the perfume is not there, remember that I, myself, cannot have been there."*

Durand was not dead. Of a sudden I knew it. He had left the hotel, as the floor clerk had said. He had not returned. The old fox was playing 'possum. But why?

I had not long to search for the reason. It was down there in the courtyard. *The Galla!*

The thing was devilishly clever and simple. He wanted the police and everybody else to believe in the fact of his assassination. The papers would bring the news. The Galla would naturally hear of it, either through the German-speaking black, or via Freetown. He would return to Africa, satisfied that somebody else, some other blood-enemy of the old slave-trader, had done the job.

Violent anger overcame me.

So Durand had used me from the first. He had played with me to save his rotten, old carcass. The ungrateful old hound! I had been a fool. Like a greenhorn I had stood there and held the bag.

I could have strangled him then and there if he had been in distance of my hands. I called him every bad name I could think of. Why had I trusted him, since I knew his former record—the fat, egotistical old scoundrel—with his sagging lips, his sardonic eyes, his flapping, criminal ears . . . the whole mass like a satyr shape with his tongue sticking out . . .

I should have made him pay for the service I had done him when I had him good and safe, when I . . .

But pardon me . . . that's another story . . .

Walking up and down in that luxurious suite of the Eden Hotel, I was mad, as mad as a hatter, to think

that this man had given both me and the Galla the slip. And I had expected to make a meal-ticket and a small-expense account of that fat scoundrel which would last me for the rest of my life. Now, by Gad, I thought, he may even have left the hotel bill for me to settle.

I tell you I was angry.

Then there was a knock at the door. The bell-boy handed me a letter marked *Rohrpost* . . . special delivery.

I opened it and crumpled the envelope into a ball which I threw into the waste-paper basket.

A piece of paper fell out, tightly closed with paste. I tore it open. There was a small handkerchief . . . a woman's handkerchief . . .

For a moment I was stupefied. What sort of fool practical joke was this? Or had I unwittingly made a gallant conquest in Berlin? I looked at the handkerchief, to see if there were any initials which might give me a clue to the identity of the sender.

Then I gave a shout.

The handkerchief was saturated with Black Lily perfume. It came from Durand. It was a sign of life. He had not left me for good.

I remembered then the rest of his cryptic saying:

*"If ever you miss me, follow the trail of my perfume."*

The message was clear, sharp. I felt elated. I apologized in the silence of my heart for all my black suspicions against the man.

Then a sobering thought came to me. How could I go all over Berlin, trailing him by the smell of his perfume? Preposterous, ridiculous. Berlin is rather a fair-sized block of real estate. A labor of Sisyphus. Quite impossible.

Then I remembered that *Rohrpost* letters can only be sent from a few postoffices, the number and situation

of which would appear on the stamp cancelation. I fished the crumpled envelope out of the basket.

The answer was there. For the cancelation mark read:

*"Post-Amt, 69, Berlin-Hundekuhle."*

My next hour was an extremely busy one. I'm afraid that everybody with whom I came into contact thought me more or less crazy.

There was first the police inspector and his two satellite detectives. They came in a minute later, energetic, bustling, eager for clues and the sour smell of blood.

I stopped them at the door of the bedroom.

"Never mind, gentlemen."

"But, Herr Fresne, we have to . . ."

"Never mind," I interrupted. "The thing is off. Release the clerk . . . and here . . . give him this . . ." I took a couple of hundred-mark notes out of my pocket, mentally charging them up to Durand. "Apologize to him if there should be a paragraph permitting that in your criminal code. Stop investigating the case. But publish the murder in the newspapers with all the gory details you can think of. See that the news is cabled to West Africa at once."

I nearly burst out laughing to see the expression on that fellow's face. To talk to him the way I had done . . . to him a *Kaiserlich Deutscher Beamter*, an officer of the reserve, a sure-enough gentleman with a "von" in front of his name. Why, such conduct should be *verboten*!

But I was pretty sure of myself. I remembered the interview which Durand had had in the Wilhelm-Strasse. So I asked the inspector to ring up the Foreign Office. I told him what to say. He stared, glared, expostulated, but finally phoned. He talked for several minutes. The re-

ply must have been satisfactory. I guess those chaps in the Wilhelm-Strasse thought they were being let off cheaply. God knows what dark secret Durand had held over their official and political heads. You know Liberia has always been a hot-bed of European intrigue.

So the police inspector obeyed me to the letter.

I also asked him to lend me a police dog. I got that, too. It came half an hour later. It was a splendid animal; gentle, powerful, intelligent, keen; half Vosges blood-hound and half English mastiff.

Hundekehle, the place where the special delivery letter had been posted, is a suburb beyond Charlottenburg, at the outskirts of Halensee, and connecting the latter place with the Grunewald. It is a colony of charming villas, surrounded by deep, flaunting gardens, and inhabited by the financial élite of the German capital.

I took a taxi as far as the outskirts of the place. There I dismissed the driver and walked on, holding my dog securely on a leash.

I still blush at the recollection of the next half hour.

I am afraid the good people of Berlin must have thought me absolutely mad. They consider most Anglo-Saxons a trifle touched anyway. But the case is plain, beyond arguing, when a well dressed and not too bad-looking specimen of that race strolls on a mild spring evening through the tree-bordered avenues of their most select suburb, holding on a leash a dog of ferocious aspect which takes alternative sniffs at the gravel paths and at a delicate lady's cambric handkerchief which said Anglo-Saxon holds in his hand.

People gave me a wide berth. Only some of the younger girls looked at me with a certain degree of sympathy. To them I was

doubtless a young Lochinvar out of the West, who had hit on an up-to-date method of discovering his lost lady-love. I am sure they wished me success in my amorous quest.

I walked and walked and walked. No result. Finally, beyond a thick clump of pine trees, I saw a magnificent pile, thickly shrouded with gardens, and a deep black park.

I made for it, and as soon as we came within hailing distance, my dog gave lusty tongue.

He had found the trail of the Black Lily perfume.

Two minutes later, I was facing Durand, over a glass of Pol Roger.

His old negro butler whom I remembered from Freetown was hovering in the background. I asked him half a dozen questions. He laughed.

"But it is simplicity itself. I told you that I fear death. I knew that the Galla would kill me sooner or later. I know the telepathic sense of hearing these medicine men possess. So I could not speak to you about them. Nor could I write. A letter is never very safe. So I disappeared. I had it all mapped out before I left Freetown. Bought the villa while I was still there. Shipped most of my stuff, also my old butler, by the fast mail steamer. I faked the murder. I sent you the handkerchief with the perfume, thinking you would use the very same method of locating me which you actually have used. I was not afraid of sending the letter with the handkerchief. For even if an associate in the pay of these murderous Galla ju-ju men should intercept and open it, he would simply have thought it to be a love token from some woman. Now the papers will bring the news of my death, and, for the time being, I am safe."

Then I asked one little question.

"But suppose those Gallas, who



know you at least as intimately as I do, associate your personality with the Black Lily perfume just as I have done? Suppose they trail you by it? You know what wonderful power of scent they possess."

Durand laughed. He patted the police dog with more affection than I would have thought possible in him.

"Oh, yes. I thought of that, too. If you will go down the corridor and

turn to the left, you will come to my bedroom."

"What of it?"

"Oh, nothing much. Only my old butler should be very busy just now throwing out every bit of my old Black Lily perfume." He filled my glass, and offered his cigarette case. "You see, Johnny, I have decided to give Coty's Red Jessamine a try for a change."



## THE TRULY MOTHER

BY DOROTHY CANFIELD

LIZBETH, standing before her little mirror, brushed her hair frantically. Wasn't this visitors' day at the Orphans' Home, and didn't folks adopt little girls sometimes, and wasn't hers the shortest, kinkiest, reddest hair that ever was? It just wouldn't look smooth, and the freckles showed worse than ever, it seemed to Lizbeth. But with all the vanity of a little girl of ten she tied on the cherished blue ribbon which had graced many similar occasions and had helped wonderfully in prolonging the hopes of Lizbeth.

She, herself, could not quite understand why it was that her little heart always beat so rapidly whenever visitors were announced. It was true she was waiting for a mother. It seemed as if she had always been waiting for a mother. But then—she never came. Why, of course, the pretty little girls were always the ones who were chosen—little girls with long golden curls

and big blue eyes, little girls with long dark curls and big black eyes, but—little girls with short red hair and green eyes—never! Then after the last visitor had departed and Lizbeth was left each time to fold away the blue ribbon, she would bravely swallow the persistent little lump in her throat, and finally console herself with the thought that, well—she hadn't seen the truly mother anyway, and that she guessed it was a good thing she hadn't been chosen 'cause what would the truly mother do if she came and found Lizbeth gone?

Perhaps this was not the clearest of logic, perhaps Lizbeth was a believer in a vague sort of predestination, but at any rate, it served its purpose, for Lizbeth was still contented.

With a parting pat to the unruly curls, Lizbeth turned to one of her eleven room-mates. A hopeless little expression covered her usual cheery

smile, "Do I look all right, Emily?"

"'Course you do, Lizbeth."

"Oh, Emily," sighed Lizbeth, "you just say that, and you know all the time how dreadful I look, and how my freckles show."

"They do look pretty bad," agreed Emily. "You were hanging up clothes yesterday without any hat on. If we only had some powder it would cover them up."

"Powder," repeated Lizbeth. But she looked somewhat uncertain.

"You know—Miss Simpson keeps it on her bureau."

"Oh yes," said Lizbeth brightening. "But then, we haven't any."

"No, we haven't," Emily said thoughtfully, "but wait a minute." She went out of the room, returning in a few moments with a cup filled with something white. "It's flour," she began. "You can't tell the difference, and I got it when nobody was lookin'."

Together they dabbed it on, and between the two and this sudden transformation there resulted one small ghost. Catching sight of its own ghastly reflection in the mirror, it laughed heartily.

"Do you know, Lizbeth," said Emily, "you don't look near so homely when you laugh." The frankness of childhood is often more truthful than pleasant. Lizbeth, however, was able to appreciate the remark. She had known Emily for three years.

"Honest?" asked Lizbeth, and laughed again, showing her even white teeth to see if her mirror gave further proof. "I do believe that powder—let's call it powder, Emily—I believe it helps."

"Silly. I told you it would. 'Course they show some, but they—they don't shine," she explained triumphantly.

Lizbeth gave a little sigh of satisfaction, and after thanking Emily,

went across the hall to her usual duty—helping some of the younger children get ready. She really didn't mind it at all, for she loved children and had one entered the room with Lizbeth that morning, there would be no questioning as to the children's love for her.

"Oh, Lizbeth," came from at least six little mouths at once. "Fix me—fix me, oh, please fix me, Lizbeth."

"Well," said Lizbeth, sadly, "I can't fix you all, but Emily is coming over in a minute and—"

"But I want you," each one clamored.

"Hush," Lizbeth held one small finger to her lips. "Now I'm going to dress Marie first this time, 'cause she's littlest, and then those I don't get to this time I'll start with next time."

"I'm next littlest," chimed one.

"Yes, you're next, Amelia," Lizbeth said gaily.

Marie, beaming with pleasure, ran quickly to Lizbeth and threw her arms about her.

"Come, we'll have to hurry," said Lizbeth, and lifting the little four-year-old into a chair, began brushing the long golden curls.

"Now if you'll all sit real still," Lizbeth went on, "until Emily and I get to you, I'll tell you a story."

Immediately, five little voices piped, "We will," and five little girls sat in a row on the floor at Lizbeth's feet.

"Well," began Lizbeth—"Once upon a time there was a be-oot-iful lady who lived in a great big palace. And she had automobiles and ponies and dogs and cats and chickens and, oh, jes' everything."

"Did she have a drind-orjan, too?" asked Marie.

"Yes, and she had a organ-grinder to come every day and play it for her out in her back yard, and a little monkey to dance—"

"Ooh!" Marie's eyes seemed bigger and bluer than ever. "I wisht I knew that lady, Lizbef."

"Yes," went on Lizbeth, "but this lady didn't have any little children, and—"

"Not a single one?" Marie being youngest was more privileged than the rest.

"No," said Lizbeth, "not a speck of a one, and she wanted a little girl so bad. And one day when she was sitting—Now, Marie, you must hold still, this is the last curl. Well, she was sitting in her garden jes' a-wishin' she had a little girl with long golden curls and big blue eyes."

"Like Marie's?" Amelia interrupted.

"Yes, and a blue hair ribbon." Meanwhile Lizbeth was transferring her own ribbon to little Marie's fair head.

"Is you doin' to let me wear dat? Oh! I des loves you so, Lizbef," Marie exclaimed, viewing herself in the glass.

"Come on, Amelia," called Lizbeth, "you're next, you know."

"Tell us the rest," they demanded. "Please, Lizbeth."

"Let's see, oh yes—the lady was wishin' she had a little girl when a little weentsy fairy jumped up on her lap and walked up her arm so's it could whisper in her ear. An' it said, 'Oh, beautiful lady—if you will go to the Female Orphans' Home, you will find that little girl you want so bad.' And she said, 'Thank you, kind fairy'—and went in the house to get her hat on—a great big hat with roses all over it."

Lizbeth stopped. Her thoughts were far away as she finished Amelia's little brown braid.

"And did she find her—did she find her, Lizbef?" asked Marie.

"Yes. She got into her biggest automobile and went after her. And when she saw her, she picked her up

in her arms and kissed her and jes' loved her so, and took her home in the automobile to the big palace where they lived happy ever after."

"And what did she do then?" asked Amelia.

"Oh, she ate ice cream and cake," went on Lizbeth—"and wore silk dresses and jes' played all day."

"Oooh, is there any more ladies like that, Lizbef, 'at wants little girls wif golden turls?" inquired Marie, anxiously.

"Lots of them," said Lizbeth.

"Oh that's a lovely story. Please tell us some more," begged the little ones.

"Not to-day, for it's time to go now," Lizbeth answered. "Come on, Emily."

"Lizbeth Allen, what on earth did you give her that hair ribbon for?" stormed Emily. "And after all that trouble to fix you up, too."

"She's so little, Emily," Lizbeth pleaded, "and she needs a mother worse than any of us. It might help her to find a mother—you can't tell."

"But you"—broke in Emily.

"Oh well, it doesn't make much difference. It hasn't so far, anyway, and jes' think, Emily, of all the visitors' days we have had. I am going to wipe this flour—I mean powder—off, too," went on Lizbeth, suiting the action to the word. "Why, it's sort of like cheating, isn't it, Emily? Jes' s'pose somebody did choose me, and then when they took me home, found all these freckles. Well, I guess they'd want to bring me back pretty quick."

"Humph—you're the funniest girl I 'most ever saw," said Emily, looking at Lizbeth as though she were a small curiosity.

"Maybe I am," replied Lizbeth, "but I think I'll jes' go down looking like I always do, and then, you know, if my truly mother comes, she won't mind freckles. Leastways, I don't

think she would, do you, Emily?"

"No, I 'spose not," was the answer. And then, the bell sounding, they went on down to the assembly hall.

Here they found the usual excitement, caused by the preparations for the occasion. Miss Biggs, the matron, stood in the center of the turmoil shrieking orders.

"Miss Simpson, have those younger children down here in front. Come, move along, children," and bang—Miss Biggs pounded her bell. "Stop this noise, do you hear? Stop it, I say."

At last they were all seated. When all was quiet the rear doors were thrown open and the visitors filed in to witness the exercises. Every child took part in something, if only a drill, from the biggest and oldest away down to little Marie, who spoke a piece. And now that the program was over the visitors were moving about, speaking to the different children. Lizbeth, glancing across the room, caught sight of Marie pointing out some one to Amelia and apparently very much excited. Somehow she had always felt a little responsible for Marie.

And that was why she made her way over to her, coming up in time to see Marie rush out in front of a handsomely dressed woman and cry, "Here she is, here she is. It's my booful lady, Amelia, wif all the roses on her hat."

"You darling child," the woman said, kissing her. "Who do you suppose she thinks I am?"

"I told her a story," explained Lizbeth, "about a beautiful lady with roses all over her hat, and she thinks you are the lady. I guess I shouldn't have told it. Emily always said I was putting such foolishness into their heads—fairies and such."

"But I love fairies. Tell me the story, little girl. I want to hear it."

And with an arm about each of them, she led the way over to some corner seats. Marie clung to her, gazing up in perfect adoration, while Lizbeth on the other side went on to tell how a be-oot-iful lady found a little golden-haired girl.

"Yes, and Lizbeth gived me her pitty wibbon so's you could find me," continued Marie.

"You blessed baby," the woman said, hugging her. "I did find you, didn't I? Or rather you found me, which is just as well. Yes, I have always known I wanted something and never stopped long enough to think what it was. But Lizbeth is my little fairy, for she whispered in my ear and told me."

Marie didn't quite understand all of this, but she understood enough to know that she had not been mistaken in finding her "booful lady."

"And has you dot a drind-orjan," she asked, "to play in your back yard?"

"I am afraid not, but we can get one," was the assurance. "Let us go now and find Miss Biggs. Come on, Lizbeth, you dear child, I do wish I could take you both, but dear me, I don't know what Mr. Clarkson will say as it is. Here I came just to represent him as trustee, and then I bring home a little girl without even consulting him—But I guess he won't mind when he sees what a sweet baby I've found," she went on, partly to herself.

And so once more Lizbeth was left behind. Curled up on a seat near the window, her little nose flattened against the pane, she sat gazing out into the fast gathering dusk. She had watched Marie being lifted into the automobile by the big chauffeur, and the beautiful Mrs. Clarkson climb in beside her, and now that she had seen them whirl around the corner and out of sight she still gazed on. Electric lights began to

twinkle cheerily in the distance, but they held little cheer for Lizbeth. Instead, two big tears rolled down the little round cheeks, while two little lips were pressed tightly together, trying so hard to suppress the sob which would come in spite of everything. She was glad—oh so glad for Marie. There could be no doubt about that. But, oh, why did God give her freckles and red hair, and would she have to just keep on hanging up clothes and washing dishes at the Home for years and years—and years?

"Oh, dear God," she breathed softly, "perhaps there aren't mothers enough to go 'round, but if you could, dear God, if you could find one for me I'd be so glad. I won't care if she isn't rich and beautiful like Marie's new mother, and I don't mind washing dishes, but I'd jes' like to belong to somebody—a truly mother, to love me and—" But Lizbeth had fallen asleep.

"**Q**UEER I can't find the child," said Miss Biggs, entering the room in which Lizbeth still lay sleeping. "I'm sure she was here this afternoon."

"Well, I guess I know she was," replied her companion, who remained in the doorway until Miss Biggs should have lighted the gas. "She looked as much like my little Daisy did as two peas in a pod. I

felt just like yelling right out, but I managed to stick it out till it was over. And then I couldn't seem to find her, so I waited for you, and—"

"Sh-sh, there she is," Miss Biggs pointed to the little figure by the window. The tears, only half dry, showed plainly in the light, and there came a belated little sob as she stirred slightly in her sleep.

"Poor little kid, poor little kid," crooned the other softly, pushing back the tousled locks from Lizbeth's forehead—"so much like my poor little Daisy was. And you say her name is Lizbeth?" she asked.

But with this the little sleeper was aroused. She awoke rubbing her eyes, to see a plump little woman with smoothly parted hair and kind, sweet eyes which looked down anxiously into the bewildered ones of Lizbeth.

"Are you—are you—oh, you *are* my truly mother, aren't you?" she said. And as the little woman took her in her arms—"I knew it, I knew it, I knew you'd come!"

"Dear little lamb," was the reply; "dear little lamb. Yes, girlie, I came as soon as ever I could, and now I'm going to take you home where you belong."

"And you don't mind freckles," asked Lizbeth, "nor red hair?"

"Mind? Why, that's how I found you—that's how I knew that you belonged to me."





## EDITORIAL CONFIDENCES

"JUST a few bouquets," writes a gentleman from Virginia, "at your May number. I don't do it often, but this is so exceptionally good that the inclination is overpowering." The writer of the letter, by the way, is not even an acquaintance of the Editor. The letter is what the patent medicine advertisements used to call an unsolicited testimonial.

"I am a traveling man," he continues, "and must buy my reading matter from the newsdealer. If I see the name of some particular writer in a magazine, I buy it for that alone and take chances on the rest of it. Usually I don't read much of it, but I read all of your May issue except the serial—and these I never read—and there was not a contribution but what I enjoyed.

"I hadn't been reading LIPPINCOTT's lately, but the first name on the cover [Eugene P. Lyle, Jr.] caught me. This writer always has something to say that is interesting, and says it in an interesting way. His descriptions, without being tedious, describe. With a word here and a word there, you have his characters in your mind as if you were looking at them . . . I must say that you haven't a half-baked story in the whole bunch, and it is well worth a quarter."

IN the present issue there is another story by Mr. Lyle, and though it is written in quite a different vein, it has the same characteristics that distinguish his work from the usual run of magazine stories. "The Spadassin" was a tale of days gone by: "A Wardrobe in Jeopardy" is distinctly timely, both as to subject matter and the manner of telling.

HUMANNESS is the keynote of the work of Hanna Rion, whose "Honoré James Henry" stands at the head of this month's table of contents. In private life she is Mrs. Frank VerBeck, and her home is in Bermuda, although at present she is living in Cornwall, England. Her work includes, besides fiction, a number of pleasant essays on gardening and outdoor life and a book on painless childbirth called "The Truth About Twilight Sleep." It may be of interest, in view of the "goat incident" in "Honoré James Henry," to note that Mrs. VerBeck is an authority on this animal, having kept a number of them as pets at her home in Bermuda.

THERE have been several queries as to the identity of Margaret E. Sangster, Jr., whose story, "In Lilac Time" was printed in last month's LIPPINCOTT's. She is the granddaughter of the late Margaret E. Sangster who for many years held an unique position in letters as a poet, essayist, and novelist, and was the counselor and friend of thousands of girls throughout the United States. Miss Sangster has followed some of the paths laid out by her grandmother, but although she is still a young woman, she has blazed some new trails for herself. At present she is engaged in editorial work on a New York magazine.

EDWARD LYELL FOX is at work on a series of articles that will show the exact responsibilities of the United States in the politics of the world. It will be in effect a plea for military and naval preparedness.—THE EDITOR.

